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THE BRITISH FINANCIAL situation is still not as clear in all its aspects as it might be, but it may at least be said with some confidence that the recent "crisis" was a great deal more of a London banking crisis and a great deal less of a British budget crisis than it is commonly supposed to have been, or than most of the statements either from London bankers or from British statesmen would lead one to imagine. Exchange does not collapse nor are foreign short-term balances suddenly withdrawn within weeks or days because of a budget situation that has been visible to the world in its main outlines for many months. Further, if it had really been the British budget deficit that was causing the gravest concern, the fact would have been immediately reflected in the price of British Government bonds in this market. The 5½ per cent. issue of 1937 this year reached a record high quotation of 108¾; the lowest price to which the bonds fell in the recent break was 104⅝, and at the present quotation they are selling on a 4½ per cent. basis, compared, for example, with approximately a 10 per cent. basis for German or Australian government bonds. The precipitating cause of sterling's weakness seems rather to have been the German banking crisis. London bankers had apparently been borrowing heavily from New York and Paris, taking advantage of low rates, to relend at higher rates to Berlin; naturally when their loans to Berlin were frozen, while their borrowings from New York and Paris fell due, their position was unenviable; gold and balances inevitably flowed out.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY, of course, that the British budget situation is not a serious one, or that measures to balance the budget were unnecessary to reassure the bankers who were being asked to extend a further stabilizing credit of $400,000,000 when $250,000,000 had been loaned only a few weeks before. It is not a situation to be viewed with complacence, however, when international bankers are able, if they choose, to wield so much power and influence over the policies of the principal governments of Europe as they are today. *The Nation* does not believe, moreover, that the measures so far proposed in Great Britain either to reduce expenditures or to increase revenues are entirely commendable. We discuss elsewhere in this issue the proposal to reduce the "dole." The apparent conversion of the trades union leaders to a 10 per cent. "revenue" tariff is equally disturbing. Such a tariff, it is obvious, would simply add one more to the barriers that have been damming the flow of world trade.

"ALL HANDS TO THE PUMPS"—that is a characterization of the British situation attributed to one of the leading Conservative members of the Cabinet. Well, why is it that it is necessary to sound the call "all hands to the pumps" to keep the British ship of state from foundering economically? It is because some three or four British statesmen on August 1, 1914, put their great nation into a war in which it had no direct interest whatever, because, as it was explained suddenly, there were moral and contractual obligations which compelled England in honor to go to the rescue of France and Belgium. The man who stated that this obligation rested upon his countrymen was the same man who in answer to a question in the House of Commons sometime previously, had denied the existence of any such agreement. We hope that Sir Edward Grey in his retirement is not overlooking this sequence of events; the crisis which has brought about the downfall of the Labor Ministry is the direct outgrowth of the plunge into war in August, 1914. The victors have been claiming ever since 1919 that they won that war. *The Nation* has always denied it because of our belief that the war is not yet ended in its economic consequences and that nobody won it or could win it. With all respect to the desires of the new National Cabinet to balance the budget, that alone will unfortunately not save England any more than it will Germany. No wonder that Bernard Shaw says that until the problem of unemployment is solved and the bankers realize that the world is not going on as it did in the nineteenth century, there is really no use of talking seriously of safeguarding England.

WHAT A RESTLESS, suspicious world we are living in at present! A military mutiny precipitates an abortive revolt in Portugal; the troops of President Carmona

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put it down with bloodshed, eighty rebels being killed. The radical members of the Bulgarian parliament shout their defiance of King Boris as he arises to address them. The Japanese arrest two American fliers suspecting that they are in fact American spies. Two dozen Japanese and Koreans are wounded in anti-Japanese riots in Tsingtao. One deputy is killed, two others hurt, in a shooting affray on the floor of the Mexican congress. Five hundred unemployed storm the provincial state house in Fray Bentos, Uruguay, demanding bread. Peru, which has had one insurrection after the other since the dictator Leguia was deposed, remains in a constant state of ferment; dozens of persons are hurt in a battle with the police; another regiment mutinies at Ayacucho, the rebellion being ruthlessly suppressed by loyal troops. Chile inducts a new president, the fourth it has had since Ibanez fell in the revolution of a month ago. A third military mutiny is reported from Ecuador; President Ayora hurriedly resigns; the people rush through the streets of Guayaquil crying "Down with the Government," not knowing who the government is. These fugitive items, culled from news dispatches of the last few days, bring rather sharply to mind a picture of the restless feeling that seems to be sweeping the world as we near the end of the second year of the economic depression. The picture is neither encouraging nor comforting.

WE ARE GLAD that Gandhi has reconsidered his decision not to attend the Round Table Conference, and is now on his way to London. The London negotiations, which will be difficult at best, would have been futile and pointless without Gandhi on hand to represent and advance the interests of the great majority of Indians. How small was the controversy with the Government of India that had earlier persuaded him to remain away can be seen from the quickness with which it was adjusted once the Congress leaders and government officials came together to discuss it. It is reassuring, too, to know that despite the Cabinet crisis, Ramsay MacDonald is to preside over the conference, since it was his sincerity, patience, and tact that helped so much to bring the first meeting to a successful conclusion. Unhappily, under the terms upon which the National Cabinet was organized, the results of the second conference cannot be submitted to the present parliament for approval. They will have to await the election of a new House of Commons, which may be predominantly, if not overwhelmingly, Conservative. Nevertheless, with Conservatives and Liberals as well as Laborites participating in the Round Table Conference, it does not seem likely that a Conservative parliament will overturn the work of that conference.

GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT deserves high praise for his courage in demanding of the New York State Legislature that it immediately raise the State Income Tax by 50 per cent to provide money for the State to support the unemployed in the coming winter. Himself a rich man, he has taken a course which will cause much growling and grumbling among the well-to-do, most of whom are themselves hard hit by loss of income. He has also set an example to President Hoover by utilizing a special session of the Legislature, called for another purpose, to provide this relief in the month of September, whereas Mr. Hoover, with incredible obstinacy and short-sightedness, refuses to call Congress together. As for the Governor's message, it is a correct statement of what the duty of the state is toward the individual citizen, for he declares that "modern society, acting through its government, owes the definite obligation to prevent the starvation or the dire want of any of its fellow men and women who try to maintain themselves but cannot." In addition he warns the Legislature that very large additional sums must be looked for during the coming winter if the State is to live up to its obligation, and he has made the excellent suggestion that the sum appropriated by the Legislature be handled by a special commission of three, one to be a woman, to be appointed by him for this emergency. He can be relied upon to make it non-political.

WHEN WE HAVE SAID THIS in praise of Governor Roosevelt's action we have, however, recorded everything that can be said in its favor. For the raising of $20,000,000 by this increased taxation will be utterly inadequate; this money cannot be described as "very large additional sums". One has only to recall that the State voted $10,000,000 for public works last winter to make it clear that the $20,000,000 will last but a little time. More than that, the Governor's assurance that no needy person shall receive money because that would be a dole, is nothing less than childish. He declares that the State through local agencies may give "necessary food, clothing, fuel, and shelter", but "under no circumstances shall any actual money be paid in the form of a dole." What an incredible absurdity! Does the fact that the State takes cash and buys coal and clothing, and pays rent, make these gifts anything less than a dole? What is there about cold cash that makes a sane man like Governor Roosevelt think that giving dollar bills to a starving man or woman is worse for his character than presenting him with a suit of clothes which he might buy for himself were the State to give him the cash? Of all silly hair-splitting, this is the worst that we have seen. But beyond and above this remains the salient fact that $20,000,000 disbursed through whatever channel may be selected will not keep a fraction of those alive who are in need of it and will be during the coming winter. We are entirely of the opinion of Norman Thomas that the relief asked of the Legislature is "tragically inadequate."

FURTHER AMAZING DETAILS of the independent campaign to defeat Alfred E. Smith in Virginia in 1928 have been brought to light through the persistent efforts of Senator Nye and his investigating committee. The campaign was directed by Bishop James Cannon, Jr., who from the start has defied the committee to inquire into his activities. None the less, the committee has learned that Bishop Cannon maintained eight separate bank accounts during the campaign, that funds were constantly shifted from one account to another in this period, and that several heretofore unreported contributions found their way into the various Cannon funds. Furthermore, Chairman Nye has charged: "When all the information is put together it will reveal not only the shifting, but clearly show actual diversion of campaign money to the private accounts of Bishop Cannon." F. P. Ferguson, president of the Hudson County National Bank, Jersey City, presented the committee with tangible evidence in the form of two cashier's checks

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that former Senator Frelinghuysen of New Jersey had contributed $10,000 to the Cannon funds. Other bankers testified that a $5,000 contribution had come from Claudius Huston, who later became chairman of the Republican National Committee. Neither of these donations had been reported as required by law. E. C. Jameson, another contributor, presented a telegram showing that the Republican National Committee had approved the independent campaign against Smith conducted by the Bishop and Bascom Slemp. Jameson asserted, however, that "the committee wouldn't do the financing; I suppose it wasn't considered good ethics." But ethics does not seem to have troubled other persons connected with the anti-Smith campaign.

JULY BROUGHT A FURTHER sharp decrease in railway revenues. Indeed, so low have the earnings dropped that some of the smaller roads, among them the Atlantic Coast Line, were run at a loss during that month. Net operating incomes of fifty-four railroads totaled only $43,715,000 for the month compared with $64,722,000 in July, 1930, and $94,282,000 in July, 1929. Thus their total revenues were 32.4 per cent less than a year ago, and 53.6 per cent lower than the same month of 1929. Many of the larger lines reported even greater proportional decreases. The Pennsylvania, for example, had a net income in July of $4,113,751, which was 55 per cent less than the $9,046,611 reported for July a year ago, and this comparatively meager return was apparently made possible only by slashing maintenance and other expenses to the amount of $5,634,000. Quite naturally the continued poor showing of the railroads has reacted unfavorably upon the investment market. The rail stocks do not move up, or at best only half-heartedly, when the market rallies, and they are among the first to fall when a bear movement develops. A year and a half ago the average price of twenty-five selected railroad stocks was $136; today the average price of the same stocks is approximately $56.

THE CONVICTION of Col. Luke Lea, who has been sentenced to serve from six to ten years in a North Carolina State prison, is another tragic outcome of the get-rich-quick episode in our economic history which was terminated so abruptly in 1929. Col. Lea served one term in the United States Senate where his arrival was heralded as indicating the prospect of a great improvement in the personnel of the Senate from the South. Exceptionally fine-looking and able, apparently of some liberal ideals, it seemed as if he had a great career before him. He could not, however, maintain himself. Nor did his excellent record in the army help him as he stood at the bar. The jury found Col. Lea guilty of borrowing $825,000 from the Central Bank and Trust Company on improper and worthless collateral; of keeping $214,000 worth of the bank's bonds without making a settlement; of depriving the bank of a profit of $45,000 on a City of Asheville note issue, besides fraudulently obtaining $300,000 worth of the bank's certificates of deposit. We are told that if the whole story of the robbing of this and other banks in Asheville with the connivance of the officials were narrated it would present one of the most startling pictures in the history of our rugged individualism, and prove very oddly the desirability of private initiative in business. Finally, it is interesting to note that as the owner of two prominent newspapers in Tennessee Col. Lea has been busy in instructing many of his fellow-citizens as to how they should vote upon economic and political problems of the day.

WHITE HOUSE press conferences have become a bitter joke in Washington. The President who abolished the "Official Spokesman," and who promised to be frank and straightforward in his relations with the newspapermen, that is, with the public, has coldly turned his back upon these correspondents. The semi-weekly press conferences in the Executive offices, which had become a permanent and to some extent a useful institution, are now omitted with increasing frequency. The correspondents went three weeks in August without being admitted into Mr. Hoover's presence. Even when the conferences are held Mr. Hoover does not answer questions addressed to him, but offers the correspondents instead previously prepared statements which all too often have no bearing on the news of the day. About the only press conference in Washington that has survived this sort of negative censorship is the daily meeting of the reporters with the Secretary of State or one of his assistants. But even this conference is now threatened. Mr. Stimson wishes, according to Clinton Gilbert, correspondent of the New York *Evening Post,* to substitute for it "occasional interviews in private . . . with some of the correspondents with whom he is personally acquainted and in whom he has confidence." Does the government belong to the people, to all the people, or is it the private property of the politicians who make up its personnel? Or do these politicians feel so superior to the politicians of other administrations that they need not submit to cross-examination by newspapermen who in the last analysis represent the people?

AS A CRUSADER for peace, we welcome Major General Smedley D. Butler. That much advertised officer is now to retire from the marines, at the early age of fifty, so that he can throw himself into the cause of the American Legion, or as he put it: "I am going to get busy in this Legion business when I get out where I won't get in wrong when I say things." Some choice extracts from a recent address by this charming and cultured gentleman and military statesman we take verbatim from the report in the columns of the New York *Times:*

> We don't want any more wars but a man is a damn fool to think there won't be any more of them. I am a peace-loving Quaker but when war breaks out every damn man in my family goes. If we're ready nobody will tackle us. Give us a club and we will face them all. . . . There is no use talking about abolishing war; that's damn foolishness. Take the guns away from men and they will fight just the same. . . . William Penn cheated the Indians out of their land with a handful of beads and a bottle of rum, but you fellows in New England put your pitchforks up against their guns and beat them. If it hadn't been for you in 1776, this country wouldn't be worth five cents an acre. That is the way Americans do the job. It takes a hell of a lot of abuse to get us riled-up, but once we get going, look out for us. . . . No pacifists or Communists are going to govern this country. If they try it there will be seven million men like you rise up and strangle them. Pacifists hell, I'm a pacifist, but I always have a club behind my back.

How's that for an officer and a gentleman?

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That Terrible British Dole

JUST how bad is this dreadful English dole, the proposed reduction of which brought about the downfall of the second British Labor government, caused the establishment of the present National Cabinet, and has already led to jubilant dispatches from Washington that the developments in London have made quite remote the prospects of our Congress's voting a dole next winter? In the first place this dole was, on August 18, the only thing which stood between 2,714,359 English men and women and starvation—620,438 more persons wholly unemployed then was the case a year ago, and approximately 1,700,000 more than when the Labor Ministry took office, just five months before the Wall Street collapse. Now, no responsible person in England's public life has from the beginning dared to suggest that the dole be wholly done away with. It has been alleged that it was too high; that it was not sufficiently safeguarded; that abuses had crept into the methods of administration; that it must be made a self-supporting system, etc. But the simple fact remains, as one of the most distinguished of British statesmen put it last winter, "If it were not for the dole, half the financiers in the 'City' would have been hanging from lamp posts before this."

Not even the recent report of the Committee on National Expenditure, headed by Sir George May, suggested the abolition of the dole. It recommended a 20 per cent cut, without apparently stopping to inquire whether such a cut would be bearable by the unfortunates who are compelled to beg their living of the government. It is utterly contrary to the fact to assert that a considerable proportion of the recipients of the dole are malingerers or work-shy. It is true, as Ramsay MacDonald himself once pointed out, that there are included in those receiving the dole many thousands of young people who have through no fault of their own never learned to work regularly, and it is also true that after years of unemployment the older people degenerate psychologically, and also physically. If one visits government unemployment offices in Europe and sees the hopelessness and the steadily increasing discouragement of initiative and vigor one can appreciate what price men pay for lack of occupation.

But how large is this soul-destroying dole? Why, it is only $4.25 a week for each man, with $2.25 for his wife, and two shillings, or fifty cents, for every child. Upon this *vast sum of $7.50 a week* a family of four people has to exist week in and week out, yes, eat, pay rent, and buy its clothes! This is what is called "destroying men's ambition," "sapping personal initiative," "teaching men to accept support in return for idleness," "corrupting their character," and all the rest of the cant, with which those opposed to the dole fill our ears. Here is the New York *Herald Tribune* declaring for example that "the effect has been demoralizing not only to public finances but to the social and political conscience of the British people. The dole has persuaded millions that the government owes them a living; it has, by discouraging the workers' initiative in seeking new employment, interfered seriously with the fluidity of labor, and it has retarded industrial recovery." It is this $4.25 per man a week which Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden wished to cut by 10 per cent, that is to $3.82½, while the May Expenditure Committee (its members all rich and prosperous and affiliated with great corporations) wished to cut to $3.40. It would be interesting to know if any one of them could keep body and soul together on such a figure. If the recipient of the dole is young and a girl, she may rejoice to receive five or six shillings a week. Yet to hear the chatter at American dinner-tables, one could readily believe that the dole is of such a size as to enable the beneficiary to attend the movies every night and to hear the opera Saturdays.

Again, few Americans realize that, in order to obtain the dole, the recipient must first prove that he is "genuinely seeking work but unable to obtain suitable employment" and that the worker, when employed, must contribute 14 cents a week to the unemployment fund, while his employer puts in 16 cents and the State 15 cents. That those sums have proved entirely inadequate to bear the burden of this unprecedented, and unprecedentedly long, period of unemployment is but natural—no one could have forseen it. As a result the Treasury has been compelled to produce large sums to meet the dole deficit, which in turn has increased the national deficit and made it harder and harder for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to calculate what his resources will be for any twelve months. In January last the debt of the unemployment insurance fund was increasing at the rate of nearly five million dollars each week. For the four weeks ending April 25 last, the deficit was $21,450,000 or $5,290,000 a week. It is higher now.

Undoubtedly this is a very grave burden upon the British finances. Every outsider must wish, as well as the British and foreign financiers who are being asked to stabilize the pound and grant additional credits to the Bank of England, that it could be cut off altogether. But the fault lies not with the dole itself, as the *Herald Tribune's* shallow or dishonest reasoning suggests, but with the economic crisis responsible for the unemployment. There is hardly a price too high to pay for tiding England over this crisis. And what is the alternative? The abandonment of the dole or its serious decrease, we believe, would menace the safety of England and invite disorder and revolution. Great Britain has not America's means for drawing upon for private charity; nor have her people—or those of any other country, learned to be as generous *in giving* as our own. To force the bulk of the 2,714,359 British unemployed to come still nearer the edge of starvation will not only be inhuman, it will be playing with dynamite.

Especially in view of the fact that, by the passage of the MacDonald unemployment insurance bill on July 29 last, most, if not all, the abuses of the dole were eradicated, are we of the opinion that just as long as there are any other means of taxation or saving available the British dole must and should be spared. The waste for army and navy could have been cut down or stopped and other resources drawn upon. But not the dole. For the British millions who have learned that the government owes them a living are right. Any government which fails to keep its citizens from starvation will not and should not last overnight.

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A Plan for Coal

WHAT shall we do about our coal industry? Let it continue to drift, as the bigger operators apparently would have it? That way lies further anarchy, and perhaps also more bloodshed and violence. The present chaotic conditions within the industry are not only injurious to the industry itself, they are a positive menace to the whole of our economic and social structure. Shall we then attempt to solve the problem simply by seeking to adjust the long-standing quarrel between the operators and miners? Will a wage agreement, however equitable, remove the causes of the industry's illness? Clearly not. Coal is not sick because wages are low. Indeed, the low wages are but a symptom of the ailment. Coal is sick because it is the victim of ruinous competition, because it has an oversupply both of mines and of labor, and because its selfish private management is completely unsocial. Production outstrips demand, and this brings lower prices and, of course, lower wages. But wages are also depressed by the existence of an oversupply of labor.

Many plans designed to correct this situation have been advanced. Many operators believe they can handle the problem if they are let alone; they want to continue the laissez faire policy which has brought the industry to its present state of virtual collapse. Others favor their exemption from the anti-trust section of the Sherman Act. Numerous disinterested and sober students of the industry see in nationalization the only hope of a permanent solution. In Great Britain, whose coal problem is similar to our own, the recently appointed Coal Mines Reorganization Commission has proposed rationalization in place of nationalization. We do not hold the British plan to be perfect beyond criticism. It has more than one defect that would have to be eliminated before it could be applied to the American industry. Nevertheless, we feel that the British plan has sufficient merit to warrant the serious consideration of the Washington Administration. It could at least be used as the starting-point for a series of discussions looking toward a solution of the problem. That is the spirit in which Sir Ernest Gowers, chairman of the commission, presented the plan to the British operators.

In brief, Sir Ernest has recommended "a policy of amalgamation" which would lead to the merging of most of the mining companies in large regional units and "reduce the number of independent concerns producing coal." His program calls for the creation of six great coal areas, each to be dominated by a single company or by a group of companies controlled by a central directorate. Each company or directorate would determine for itself where coal could most economically be produced within its territory, and each would control sales, transportation, and finances. The thousand or more coal companies now operating in Great Britain would be reduced to a mere handful; as many as 100,000 miners would be compelled to seek employment in other industries. Drastic as this appears, it seems upon casual study the best way of eliminating suicidal competition which now has the British industry by the throat. It would also tend to relieve the equally costly competition in wages. In commenting upon the rationalization plan, the London *New Statesman and Nation* expressed the hope that "the commission will see the necessity of organizing these new large units as public-utility corporations rather than as merely private bodies." Despite our own not altogether happy experience with public utilities, we agree that the public character of the industry must be recognized. But even as public-service corporations the coal companies would have to be most strictly regulated, and this regulatory power would of necessity rest, not with the States, but with the federal government.

One flaw remains in the British plan. Where in a country that has had an average of over a million jobless since 1920 are a hundred thousand discarded miners to find work? If the rationalization scheme were adopted in this country, fully as many as our own miners would be shunted out of the industry. Where would they find new jobs? We, too, have our millions of unemployed. Perhaps the unwanted miners would be no worse off walking the streets of Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago, or Denver than they are in their miserable coal towns today, but that is a heartless view to take of their plight. In England they have at least the "dole" to fall back upon; our miners would have only the empty Hooverian policy of self-help with which to feed and clothe themselves. Perhaps, however, a govenment enlightened enough to adopt for the American coal industry a scheme similar to the Gowers plan would also be intelligent enough to take the necessary measures to provide for the workers who would thus be discarded. Meanwhile we earnestly urge the government to begin work upon some sensible plan for bringing order out of the present chaos in the bituminous industry.

Frank Harris

WHAT precisely will be the future place of Frank Harris in English or American letters it is difficult to say. Most of his work seems already forgotten; at least it has been virtually ignored by the younger literary generation, and though this neglect is in large part undeserved, it seems likely that Harris himself, in the end, will be remembered longer than any of his books. His most important work was his own life and personality. That life was a stormy one, and seemed to bring him into contact with almost everyone eminent in literature from the late Victorian Age to our own.

His checkered career was foreshadowed at the age of fifteen, when he won a Cambridge University prize. As he was considered too young to enter the university, the judges gave him the second prize—$50—and suggested that he wait another year. He replied by taking the money and shipping as a steerage passenger immediately for America. Arrived here, he followed a checkered career; he was bootblack, ditch digger, "sandhog"—until he collected enough money to move on to Chicago, where he became a hotel clerk. According to his own story, while there he met the Spanish daughter of a Southwestern ranchman, and, infatuated, followed her to Texas. He related his experiences in the Wild West of those days in a book published only last year, "My Reminiscences as a Cowboy." He professed to have known Wild Bill Hickok intimately, and to have participated in many hairbreadth adventures; he declared, in fact, that his three

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great heroes were Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Wild Bill. Close students of the west described in Harris's book, however, found several important discrepancies in his account, and presumed to doubt some of his alleged experiences. But Harris's career remains full and picturesque enough even if we disregard his supposed western adventures altogether.

It was Thomas Carlyle himself who is supposed to have urged Harris to take up writing in London; it was here, at least, that he finally came into real prominence. For, becoming editor of the *Evening News,* he soon revived it from its moribund state. Later he became editor of the *Fortnightly Review,* then of the *Saturday Review,* and later still of the *Candid Friend.* In America he edited *Pearson's Magazine* for several years. Everywhere his editorship was marked by courage and forthrightness, and by an uncanny ability to surround himself with the right men. It was he who persuaded an almost obscure youngster named George Bernard Shaw to join the staff of the *Saturday Review* as dramatic critic; who hired Max Beerbohm to write essays, H. G. Wells to review books, D. S. MacColl to write on art.

Then Harris turned to a little outside writing on his own account. In 1900 he produced a very skilful novel called "Montes the Matador." In 1908 he caused a sensation with "The Bomb," the outcome of his knowledge of the Chicago labor disputes of the eighties. But though he wrote later some extremely able short stories, his real talents were rather in criticism and portraiture, and many of his liveliest pages are to be found in "The Man Shakespeare," "The Women of Shakespeare," and the several volumes of "Contemporary Portraits." His criticism was hardly what one would call impartial or judicious; his judgments of his contemporaries were marred and distorted by all sorts of crochets, prejudices, personal antagonisms, but they were unfailingly penetrating and alive. Ten years ago, H. L. Mencken pronounced Harris's "Oscar Wilde" by long odds the best literary biography ever written by an American up to that time. Though Harris died at Nice almost in poverty, obliged at last to write for a chit-chat periodical on the Riviera for miserable pay, he found time virtually to finish his "Life" of Bernard Shaw, with whom he had quarreled for many years. It is expected that the work will be published this fall; and however wrongheaded many of its statements and judgments may prove to be, one can feel with confidence that it will contain many revealing flashes.

To the younger generation Harris is perhaps known principally for his volumes on "My Life and Loves." It is just possible that the autobiography's reputation for scandalous self-revelation, wholly apart from its comparative merit, will keep it alive longer than any of his other books. The work at least sets all of Harris's virtues and defects in a brilliant light. He undoubtedly had genius, but it was a singularly uneven genius. Pages of brilliant observation are followed by pages of appalling banality; the man seemed devoid of self-criticism. If the ordinary reader is most likely to be either thrilled or disgusted by the salacity of "My Life," the more sophisticated reader is apt rather to be amused by the curious naivete and humorlessness with which most of the sexual adventures are recited and soliloquized upon. But the work is fascinating because it sets forth, both consciously and unconsciously, a personality that, while singularly disagreeable to many, was at least one not easily to be forgotten.

On Helping Ourselves

WE are told that we must learn to help ourselves in this grave era of depression. To seek any other way of relieving the suffering and misery we see all about us would be unpatriotic. Indeed, it would, in the words of our foremost self-helper, Herbert Hoover, "break down the initiative and enterprise of the American people." Hence, we must not heed the elaborate economic plans brought forth by otherwise well-meaning economists, for their plans are based on the un-American supposition that we can best help ourselves by helping one another, and that way lies disloyalty. Nor ought we to listen to the soft words of Thomas Campbell, the wheat farmer, who would put all our unemployed in the army. Mr. Campbell thus urges government aid, or social cooperation, which is most assuredly not the Hoover or "American way."

But how are we to go about this business of helping ourselves? By following the advice of Daniel Willard, who said he would "rather steal than starve?" That, alas, would be unwise, for it would likely land us in jail, and in jail there is very little opportunity for anyone to help himself. Or shall we plant gardens and so bow to the wisdom of Henry Ford? Many of the bituminous miners tried that, but just as their vegetables were ripening this summer a goodly number of them found themselves, their families, and their household belongings dumped outside the company "patch", out beyond the barbed-wire fences where they could not reach their gardens. Recently a member of the London Stock Exchange urged that brokers be permitted to advertise their wares. He said business was bad because people were not buying stocks and bonds. Advertising, he argued, would cure all this; the people would buy good securities, and business would recover. Here is at least the germ of a splendid idea. Advertising as a stimulant to prosperity has been publicly blessed by Calvin Coolidge, and has had more than one kind word from Mr. Hoover. Why not persuade our unemployed to help themselves by advertising for jobs? That would show the rest of us whether they really wanted to work or not. And such a scheme might succeed—if only there were jobs enough to go around. Lastly, we might all go into business like the apple-vendors of last fall and winter. Apples are somewhat outmoded today, of course, and so are tangerines and candy bars. But there are other commodities that appeal to pedestrians; ice cream, for example. Only the other day a group of unemployed Chicagoans took to selling ice cream from the curbstones. Their plan worked well until the unpatriotic ice cream dealers of Chicago objected that the curbstone vendors were underselling them. Seemingly the "American way" does not mix with business.

Yet we are not without hope. We should like to have one of our more successful patriots offer a handsome prize, say a bound volume of Mr. Hoover's several speeches on the "American way," for the most practical formula of self-help. That ought surely to bring out many brilliant suggestions. However, until some such contest is held we are strongly inclined to award the palm to Mayor George D. Begole of Denver. He has suggested that the unemployed of Denver help themselves by panning the Colorado streams and abandoned mine dumps for gold!

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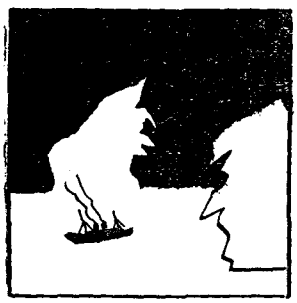
Speaking of Revolution . . .

By HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON



IT happened in Los Angeles, that famous aggregation of six suburbs in search of a city. In Los Angeles all things are possible, for it is the home of Krazy Kat, yet it believes in Smedley D. Butler. And so, although the following seems incredible, those who are familiar with the city of the Little Angils will shout "Amen," for they will know that I speak the truth.

There came unto this Pueblo (inhabited, alas, no longer by Indians) a certain foreign Professor who (yes, you guessed it the first time!) delivered a lecture. The subject of his lecture, God knows, was harmless enough. The learned Teuton spoke on the history of art, A-R-T, Art, as it is spelled in that blessed part of the land where everything is wholesome and pure and cellophane-wrapped and not a thought in a car-load. Having spoken, he went his way rejoicing to study certain of the less well known dialects which have become extinct in Europe's ancient ghettoes but which may occasionally be heard along the shores of the Pacific when Directors and Magnates disagree upon the details of one of their forthcoming productions and talk to each other as if they were close relatives.

A few days later the learned man was invited to visit one of the local newspapers. The owner of the paper wished to congratulate the speaker upon the success of his brilliant discourse. Lecturers are human, like the rest of us. A little praise, as that holy man Paul of Tarsus used to say, is good for the system and one can't live on chicken-salad alone. The man of Power and Paper Pulp was most gracious. "Doctor," he said, "I hear wonderful things about that speech of yours. My wife attended it. I am too busy to go in for social functions, but I like the women to amuse themselves. Only one thing I must ask of you. In the future, please do not mention the word 'revolution'."

The Professor Doctor was greatly puzzled.

"But I talked on art," he answered. "Politics is not my *Fach*. I talked on art."

The man of Power and Pulp opened a drawer and took out a clipping. Then he read as follows: "Among other things the lecturer declared that art criticism was of very recent origin and had not been known as a separate science until several years after the French Revolution."

"There," he said, "The French Revolution . . . revolution! . . . You used the word 'revolution'."

The Professor Doctor tried to argue. "But, my dear sir," he stammered, "I used that expression because I needed a fixed date . . . just as one would say 'before the murder of Lincoln' or 'the invention of gun-powder'. . . . One does not necessarily believe in gun-powder or murder just because one happens to mention a date with which every man, woman, and child is familiar."

Power and Pulp, however, refused to be convinced. "That has nothing to do with the case," he retorted angrily, "nothing at all. You mentioned the word 'revolution'. That word makes us see red. We don't want to hear it, and if you want to be a success in this country, let me give you a friendly warning. In the future, don't use that word. . . . Talk about everything you like, but don't mention 'revolution'!"

A certain ship went out to sea, but it never came back to port.

That ship was forced to go at full speed through an ocean infested by icebergs. Greenland ice proved stronger than Glasgow steel. And ten minutes after the collision, those on the bridge knew that the end had come.

I hate to bring up the ghastly recollection of those hideous days of waiting, but I have no choice. There has been another collision. The fanciful illusions of mass-production and the brutal necessities of our daily needs have clashed. The whole planet is still quivering from the shock. Suppose therefore that we face certain unpleasant facts and draw certain inevitable conclusions. If during those terrible hours of night when the vessel was slowly sinking, every one had been warned of the immediate danger, hundreds of other lives would have been saved. If, instead of reassuring the passengers with pleasant words: "Everything is quite all right . . . just a little mishap to the engines . . . better go back to bed . . . breakfast as usual tomorrow at eight . . ." these poor victims had been told, quietly and intelligently but firmly, "This is a serious business. Get your warmest clothes. Go out on deck and be prepared," a good many more would now be among the living.

They were drowned, most of them, like rats in a trap. They were drowned with the best of intentions. But the result was the same.

There are two conflicting schools of opinion in this year of Grace 1931.

There are those who wish to send the passengers back to bed with vague promises about "Breakfast as usual." In the meantime, help may come from unexpected sources. If it does, all will be well and the matutinal porridge will await the smiling pilgrims who will rub their hands and will slap each other on the back and say, "Quite a little scare last night! Of course, I knew right along that it amounted to nothing."

There are those who, able to learn from experience, suggest a different course of action. They do not advocate panic. Heaven forbid! They see no reason for any hasty action. They are convinced that on this occasion at least there are a sufficient number of life-boats for every one on board. And it may not even be necessary to leave the ship. But they want both passengers and crew to realize that all is not well with the ancient and trusted craft. They tell them to be prepared for eventualities. They can make up for lost sleep when the trouble is over. But just now they have only one duty—keep awake.

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The Tragic Fall of Ramsay MacDonald

By OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

MacDONALD out as Labor Prime Minister, and unlikely ever to lead his party again? That is grave news, indeed, for this embattled world. For whatever else may be said of him, here is one man who resolutely stands for peace in the world, who was determined that never should war disgrace and encrimson the globe while he held the helm of Great Britain. Never before has such a devoted and proved lover of peace, or one who made greater sacrifices for it, held one of the four greatest political positions in the world. Plenty of Presidents and Prime Ministers have given lip service, only to make war when the temptation came—did not Woodrow Wilson assure me that under no earthly circumstance would he ever permit the United States to be drawn into the World War? But MacDonald resolutely, and without a moment's hesitation, put aside all temptation when war came in 1914. Lloyd George, who had so admirably, at the risk of his life, opposed the Boer War, ratted when the Great War came. They took MacDonald up on a high mountain and said to him that if he would go along he would be one of five to conduct his country's warring, that he could aspire to—well, anything he desired. He chose the "lonely furrow" instead. He went against the war, and old friends crossed the street to avoid him. He lost his seat in Parliament in the Khaki election; his career seemed finished, over—nothing before him but the precarious livelihood of an independent journalist. Had anyone said then that this despised man would three times be Prime Minister of Great Britain, he would have been laughed to scorn.

Today we cannot stop to wonder that MacDonald heads the national government of all three parties to rescue Great Britain in her present financial crisis. The salient fact which confronts us is that this ministry is not to live more than three or four months at most; that his party has already deposed from its leadership the man who has twice successfully headed it at the polls; who has placed the whole world in his debt for his wise, his sagacious, yes, his brilliant leadership, which not only led to Locarno, but has made him the outstanding figure in the fight to keep the world from destroying itself by the madness of modern war. Wherever men's hearts are allured to the gospel of peace, wherever people aspire to the brotherhood of man, wherever those are to be found who admire a brave and fearless man ready to stake his all upon what he believes to be the right, there will be grief at the news. It is a blow to the peace movement everywhere and one that will be regretted a long time.

Whatever the final outcome, it is plain that once more MacDonald has taken the course he believed to be right at an extreme cost to himself; his career as leader of British Labor appears today to be at an end. In taking the position that the budget must be safeguarded even by the cutting of the dole, he has put himself in the position of being charged with having surrendered to the bankers who have appeared to make this the sine qua non of their giving Great Britain the financial aid it imperatively needs. Hence the allegation that he has betrayed Labor's cause; hence the vote to oust him and to put Arthur Henderson in his place, as one who has stood by Labor at all costs, who has been true to the tenets of Socialism, who has refused to balance the budget at the cost of the unemployed. Let me say at once that Mr. MacDonald's defence of his action, in his radio talk of August 25, seems distinctly weak. It was that in this emergency all Englishmen will be called upon to make sacrifices in order to balance the budget, and that the unemployed should bear their share as well as everyone else, espcially as the cost of living has dropped 11½ per cent; if 10 per cent is cut from the dole the unemployed will, he said, still be 1½ per cent better off than they were two years ago. But this presupposes that the dole is a luxurious grant, so adequate that the decrease in the cost of living gave a margin for extravagances.

That is emphatically not the case. The recent legislative revision was announced as having removed duplications and frauds, or excessive payments. Ordinarily the dole barely keeps body and soul together. More than that, from the Socialist point of view it is, rightly or wrongly, nothing less than treason to take toll from the unemployed when there are still taxable sources among the rich, when there are still great classes living in idleness and luxury. To this Mr. MacDonald did not refer; nor did anything he said put at rest the charge that it was a condition of the foreign bankers—with their well-known hostility to the dole—that the dole be cut. That may prove in time to be another mare's nest; the Prime Minister's statement that the proposed economies had been communicated to American authorities will only add fuel to the flames, and so will his reference to the pressure of "public opinion abroad." Even Dr. Christopher Addison, one of the ablest and most responsible of Labor Ministers, declares that proposals were made which were more than enough to balance the budget without touching unemployment pay. But, he adds, "the pistol that had been put to our heads all the time was not held in the hands of the Trade Union Congress, but in the hands of the controllers of the money market."

There stands the situation in all its stark tragedy. As MacDonald said in his radio address, he was present when the Labor Party was born. "I was its nurse when it emerged from infancy and had attained adult years"; and he assured his listeners that he had changed "none of my beliefs and none of my ideals." He admitted that he had no Labor Party credentials for what he was doing, but he added: "Be that as it may, I have the credentials of an even higher authority. My credentials are those of national duty, as I conceive it, and I obey them irrespective of the consequences." Will there be an end to this new "lonely furrow" which will be his to plough when the Nationalist Government closes? I fear not; but at least it is clear for all men to read that Ramsay MacDonald has again been ready to sacrifice his career for his beliefs. He has again proved that he places office-holding far below the satisfying of conscience, an inestimable contribution to political idealism.

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None the less it is undeniable that the speed with which his party turned upon him is in considerable measure due to the widespread dissatisfaction within the party itself as to his conduct of its affairs during the nearly two and a half years that the Labor Ministry was in office. Even his severest critic will admit that Ramsay MacDonald is a great foreign minister. It has been both his strength and his misfortune that his interests lay chiefly in foreign affairs. His is not a mind which can deal with difficult economic problems; which can take a matter like the dole, or some intimate problem of finance and economics, and wreak itself upon the figures and details. These he must leave to other people. I have no doubt that the reports are correct that for six months past the British bankers have been warning him of the gravity of the crisis, that he realized its seriousness, but did not grasp its urgency. It is reported that he "hesitated too long," and that he did not dare to reveal to his own Trade Union followers all of the discouraging figures given him by the financiers. The bankers, on the other hand, were in the extraordinarily difficult position of having to communicate the gravity of the crisis to their fellow-citizens without, however, so alarming the public and foreign countries as to precipitate a crisis by causing fear abroad. That something of this kind did come to pass explains the suddenness of the Cabinet crisis. It was a bold stroke to form that National Cabinet for a limited period of political truce. If it was MacDonald's idea, it reflects credit upon the resourcefulness of his statesmanship.

What we are witnessing is another one of those tragedies of the idealist and reformer who takes high office and finds himself face to face with overwhelming responsibilities which he could not imagine when he headed the opposition and was without the responsibility of governing. If the devil has set any trap more dangerous for human beings than the wielding of great power over one's fellows, I do not know it. Is there a more dangerous virus in all the world than that injected into one's veins by the mere fact of heading a nation? It brings out at once the weaknesses, the vanities, and the desire to dominate that seem to lie dormant within the best of us. There is no doubt that there has always been in MacDonald a leaning toward domineering, and a desire, as one of his biographers put it, for "obedience rather than understanding, loyalty rather than companionship." In London one has heard of him criticisms which sounded strangely like those current in Washington about Woodrow Wilson when he was in the White House—that he was arrogant, slow to take advice or to seek it, a poor judge of men and apt to forget old friends, and wholly unforgiving when there arose differences of opinion. Nothing in my own experience has borne this out; but the volume of unfavorable criticism has been there.

Again, MacDonald feels very deeply, and easily becomes profoundly stirred as comports with his Scotch and warmly religious nature. Add to this the terrific strain of office-holding and the most difficult period in the world's history (a strain that never lets up for a single minute, not even when interrupted by brief vacations at Lossiemouth), and you have a situation to engender sparks readily. But I fancy that when some of these periods of white heat have burned themselves out he has been quick to see where he erred. The man is so high minded, so idealistic, so sure of himself and the soundness of his own principles that, like many another similarly situated, he has found it hard, indeed, to be tolerant with those who disagreed or questioned.

None the less, when all is said and done it is a very great figure, and a noble-spirited man whose passing we are witnessing. No one can deny that he has sought to live up to the very highest ideals of the Socialist creed, even though his administration, because of its absorption in foreign affairs, and for other reasons, has failed to put through the radical socialistic reforms for which his party clamored, especially its youth. I well remember the feeling of dismay with which I left the presence of one of MacDonald's best-known Ministers in June, 1929, a month after the Government had taken office. I went to ask what radical reform was first on the carpet. The Minister stared in blank astonishment. "What, for example?" "Well, let us say the nationalization of the coal mines, or the railroads," I responded. "But, Mr. Villard, if we did that we should be thrown out of office at once." I have found many Englishmen to agree with me that, aside from international affairs, it would have been far better had the MacDonald Government early seized upon one such issue and allowed itself to be thrown out of office, and taken its chance of coming back, soon or late, with a Parliamentary majority. The only question is whether, if this policy had been followed, the international situation would not have been far worse than it is because of an interregnum by the Baldwins, Churchills, and Chamberlains. In a sense MacDonald has deliberately sacrificed the domestic fortunes of his party to international considerations. Perhaps another man, perhaps an Arthur Henderson, could have achieved great things in both fields, even though his was a minority government.

That MacDonald was born to be a leader, no man can deny. His obscure origin has been no more a handicap to him than was Abraham Lincoln's to the Emancipator. Both had the divine spark from birth. I have heard and seen MacDonald under all sorts of conditions, but I think that I was never more impressed than on that day on his eleven-day visit to America to inaugurate the Naval Disarmament Conference, when he made three great speeches. The last was the greatest. It was before a mixed group of American public men, financiers, heads of big business enterprises, and others interested in foreign affairs. He, the Socialist Prime Minister of Great Britain, was introduced by that most ardent hater of Socialists, Elihu Root, in terms of high eulogy. Never have I seen an audience of this type more profoundly impressed and stirred. MacDonald's magnificent voice was at its best, and its exquisite deep notes carried, I am told, marvelously over the radio. He looked every inch the statesman, the leader of a nation. His personal beauty, his superb stature, the whole charm of his personality, the fire of his speaking were irresistible, and no one could question the absolute sincerity and the earnestness with which he uttered every word.

So, when the history of this time comes to be written, I still have faith that however tragic his error of judgment in regard to the dole may prove to have been, history will yet write down Ramsay MacDonald as one of the great seers, prophets, and leaders of our time, all the more compelling because of the weaknesses that are part of this brave and flashing spirit, this Highland chieftain, who has three times preached to the world with religious fervor with the Prime Minister's robes about him.

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Free Trade and the United States*

By HENRY RAYMOND MUSSEY

THE immediate prospects for free trade in the United States are highly discouraging. The Republicans are committed to an unbending protectionism. The Democrats, all except a few courageous souls like Cordell Hull, have abandoned all pretense at principle, and only vie with the Republicans in getting their feet into the trough. The South, the traditional home of free trade, has forsaken its position in an ill-advised and belated attempt to snatch some of the loaves and fishes for itself. Nowhere in sight is there any competent political leadership capable of making an effective business issue out of what is already a world issue of transcendent importance. It would be a bold prophet who should predict the early relaxation of trade shackles in the United States.

Yet the stars in their courses are fighting against Smoot, Hawley, and Company. Both the business interests of the United States, broadly viewed, as against the immediate narrow desires of this or that particular industry, and the needs of a world perishing for lack of opportunity to work and trade, call loudly for the beginnings of an intelligent trade policy here. As in so many other matters, so in the tariff situation, by reason of our wealth and economic power we hold the key, and if only we had the courage we might break the jam in which the world is hopelessly involved. The need is seen by all competent students and was given full official recognition in the resolution of the World Economic Conference of 1927—representing not only the League of Nations but non-members like the United States—that the time has come to move in the direction of lower tariffs. Instead of yielding to the superficial discouragements of the moment, then, the free traders of the United States (for there are a few left) ought to wage a sturdy campaign on both the business and the international front.

The general argument for free trade was so well presented by Mr. Hirst in the first article of the present series that little remains for other writers except to point out the special circumstances that render such a policy imperative in particular countries. In our own case, the basic conditions are well known, yet they cannot be too often repeated. The war threw forward the economic development of the United States by a quarter-century, but set us back politically in no less degree. Consequently our political and economic machinery is badly out of gear. Economically, the great convulsion only hastened the process by which we were rapidly passing over from the position of a relatively underdeveloped debtor country to that of a creditor state exporting manufactures. The suddenness of the transition has greatly increased the difficulty of the new adjustment, at the same time making it the more imperative in the interest alike of ourselves and all the rest of the world.

To take the financial position first, we are due, under the new conditions, to receive nearly a quarter billion of dollars annually on account of war debts, and considerably more than twice that amount on balance in interest and dividends from private investments abroad. The latter sum, moreover, continues to mount because of the continuing investment of American funds in foreign securities, which investment alone has made it possible to balance our accounts in the years since the war. There are just four methods of getting payment in international transactions—by accepting from abroad either goods, services, securities, or gold. In 1929, for example, our sales of goods abroad exceeded our purchases by about three quarters of a billion dollars, and an equal amount was due us on account of war debts and net interest on foreign investments. Against this, our tourists spent something like $565,000,000 more abroad than foreign tourists spent here; we owed more than a hundred millions net for freight; and immigrant remittances and charitable contributions came to a quarter billion more—a total well up toward a billion dollars of pay that we took in the form of services. Our net purchases of foreign securities in that year, largely in consequence of the allurements of speculation here, were cut to little more than a third of a billion. There was no other possible way of balancing the account except with short term banking loans or with gold, and we imported during the year something more than a hundred millions of dollars worth of that metal. During 1930 and 1931, with the decline in American buying of foreign securities and the falling off of immigrant remittances and other balancing items, the situation has been even worse, and the drain of gold from countries that sorely need it to the United States, which already has far more than anyone knows what to do with, has gone on in heavily increasing amounts. The existing German crisis illustrates the sort of thing that is to be expected in consequence.

Our weight in the economic world is so great that we bid fair to drag the whole world down to financial ruin if we refuse indefinitely to break the bonds with which we shackle trade. We cannot go on getting gold forever. In fact, as is suggested by the German situation, we have already passed the practicable limits of gold accumulation. Again, the past two years show clearly that we cannot always and forever count on growing American investment abroad and indefinitely expanded tourist expenditures to meet the enormous bills of foreigners here. What then? Our so-called "favorable" balance of trade—that is, our excess of value of exports over imports of merchandise—will have to come to an end just as it has done in every other country when it reached a similar stage of industrial and financial growth. To try to dam up the flow of imports by further tariff increases under such circumstances is only to court financial disaster for ourselves and everybody else.

But that is not all. Industrial conditions as well as financial demand a change. Up to the close of the nineteenth century we were relatively undeveloped economically. Agriculture was still our dominant industry, and our manufacturers were busily engaged in taking possession of our home markets, in which process they could often gain if foreign goods were shut out by tariffs. By ingenious political combinations they enlisted the farmers to back the solid manu-

* The second of a series of six articles on free trade. The third, on Germany's Gain from Abolishing Tariffs, by Dr. Karl Brandt, of Berlin, will appear in our next issue.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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facturing phalanx in favor of protection. Meanwhile our great staples, the foodstuffs and raw materials of industry, were eagerly received by Europe, which in return not only sent us a great variety of manufactures that we did not yet make ourselves, but also in payment invested great sums in our railroads and industrial enterprises, to our gain and theirs alike.

By the turn of the century a great change had come, and a rapid shift in the industrial balance had begun. Machinery of all kinds, petroleum products, refined copper, the coarser textiles, automobiles, and dozens of other manufactured products began taking their place in our export manifests along with the familiar wheat and cotton and naval stores and beef and pork products of our first three hundred years. Wherever cheap materials, mass-production methods, and extensive application of machinery counted, American manufacturers not only appropriated the whole home market, but sent their products into neutral markets and into Europe itself.

But when this occurred, the tariff phalanx was broken, and the Democrats had a relatively easy time in passing the Underwood-Simmons tariff in 1913, with important export manufacturers indifferent to lower rates or actually in favor of them because what they wanted was lower costs and not utterly unnecessary protection in the home market. Free lumber, coal, leather, wool, boots and shoes, and crude iron and steel products, with reduced rates on many more advanced products, represented in fact a first installment of what might well have developed, but for the war, into a vigorous and salutary free-trade movement. The war, with its exacerbated nationalism, with its practical embargo on imports from Europe, and with the utter disorganization of trade and finance consequent upon the struggle, made possible the emergency tariff of 1921, the Fordney-McCumber abomination of 1922, and the Smoot-Hawley monstrosity of 1930. But one fact should never be forgotten. Some of the most effective opposition to the last-named measure came from American sugar manufacturers operating in Cuba, from automobile makers who waged relentless war on the measure all the way through, from the United States Steel Corporation, which actually killed the manganese duty after the House Committee had accepted it, from the great oil companies, which successfully resisted the enactment of any duty on crude petroleum, and from other export manufacturers who did not want the purchasing power of their foreign customers lessened. The bankers who finance these manufacturers and that other great group of international bankers whose concern is with the smooth flow of the currents of international trade and finance stood behind them and stand quietly today for trade liberalism. The growing power of our export manufacturers is suggested when one remembers that the proportion of Australia's imports of manufactured goods coming from the United States rose from 14 per cent in 1913 to 24.6 per cent in 1929, while corresponding figures for the proportion of manufactured exports drawn by other countries from the United States are: Argentina, 14.7 and 25.4 per cent; Chile, 16.7 and 33.9; Japan, 16.8 and 29.5; China, 6 and 18. In the face of such a showing it is plain that protection has become a policy for industrial cripples in this country, and that our really vigorous industries are likely increasingly to favor a policy of freedom. Our economic situation, as well as our financial situation, dictates such a policy with constantly increasing insistence.

On the business side the United States would have everything to gain and very little to lose by a rapid movement toward free trade. The first steps would naturally be taken, as they were taken in 1913, by a mere cessation of the process of raising effective rates, by a sweeping away or lowering of duties that are superfluous or excessive, and by a further freeing of foodstuffs and materials. Such steps would in themselves produce no notable results, but would serve notice on the world that the United States no longer proposed to continue its efforts to make trade progressively more difficult if not impossible. Such notice from such a source would exercise a strong, it might well be a determining influence toward reversal of the suicidal policy of trade restriction that all countries have increasingly followed since the war.

Predictions of industrial disaster from action of this kind are idle. It would mean at once the strengthening of American industry and the increase of American trade, and at the same time would bring similar gains for other countries. Take, for example, the bloody angle of the tariff controversy, free wool. As the brief pre-war experience under the Act of 1913 indicated, a rapid adjustment of wool-growing and woolen manufacturing might reasonably be expected, under which the quality of American clothing would be improved and its price perhaps somewhat reduced. The buying power of wool growers abroad, who produce in great quantities many grades of wool not grown here at all, would be increased, as would that of all consumers of American woolens. Experience indicates that the American sheep industry, with its joint production of wool and mutton, while it might be to some extent unfavorably affected in those regions which grow sheep prevailingly for their wool, would not be destroyed or even threatened, and it would cease to be a parasite on industries that stand on their own legs. It is doubtful whether the increased competitive power of our woolen manufacturers would injure even the foreign producers of woolens, for the simple reason that the increased buying power of wool growers and woolen consumers might well take off the market a distinctly increased quantity of woolen goods. The specific situation differs in various industries, but the general argument holds, and it may be confidently asserted that a rapid movement toward free trade, if directed with reasonable intelligence, could be made in the United States at the present time, not only with a minimum of industrial disturbance, but with definite benefits to agriculture and manufacture alike, and with some gains to the consumer. The shaping of the details of such a policy at each particular point of time might well be in the hands of an expert commission, which would of course be hampered by no such silly formula as "equalizing the cost of production at home and abroad," but the essential thing would be the policy itself. The immediate and direct gains to consumers would be far smaller than is often represented, for the double reason that the mythical billions by which the tariff mulcts consumers through the direct raising of prices do not exist, and that if they did it would be impossible to slash the rates without widespread industrial disaster; but there would be some gains, as in the case of woolens above suggested. The great benefits, however, would be indirect, and would come largely with the increased buying power of foreigners, who would again be able to count with rea-

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sonable certainty on an American market if they had built one up; for we should have ceased to contemplate deliberately slaughtering foreign industries, as we slaughtered the Swiss watch and clock industry, for example, in 1930.

By making it possible for trade currents to flow again between countries, instead of being dammed up within national boundaries, which has been the tendency of almost all post-war tariff legislation everywhere, we should do the most important thing possible to restore the smooth working of the gold standard, on which the financial and industrial stability of the whole western world, including our own country, so intimately depends. As it is, we bear a primary responsibility for the spasmodic and disastrous gold shipments that must occur whenever the investment movement is in any way interfered with. By its contribution to financial stability and to the consequent restoration and development of world commerce, the very first step toward a liberal trade policy by the United States would have a value for the reestablishment of world prosperity and peace wholly out of proportion to any of its immediate direct consequences. It would be worth more than a dozen haggling and bargaining international conferences in which the representatives of each state try to get the better of the others. In fact, without such action, all the conferences in the world cannot get very far. Furthermore, in taking such action we need not wait for the aid or consent of any other nation. One hundred per cent Americans can join hands with the rankest internationalists in putting through a policy that is demanded at once by the interests of our own country and by the needs of other lands imperiled by our present shortsighted, selfishly and individually greedy, and ultimately suicidal policy. Do Americans really care for peace and prosperity at home and abroad? If so, let them remember that the most effective means of promoting it lies entirely in their own hands.

Making Mexico Jew Conscious

By ANITA BRENNER

Mexico City, August 15

WE have become accustomed in recent years to discovering business wars under movements with patriotic or humanitarian labels. We have also been obliged to discount demagoguery which blames the crisis absurdly on some one nationality, race, religion, sex, or event. The anti-Jewish movement recently started in Mexico reveals some of these familiar modern phenomena, against a semi-medieval backdrop. Medieval, because a Jew to ninety-nine out of a hundred Mexicans is a wholly mythical fiend, horned, black-souled and somewhat cannibalistic; but a medieval Christian could pick his target in a crowd, whereas only the hundredth Mexican supposes that Jews sometimes take on human form.

Thus mass anti-Semitism in Mexico is pure folk-lore; and the anti-Jewish movement is a campaign to inject into this folk-lore the sullen and always latent Mexican resentment against foreigners of the sort called invaders, heretofore usually identified as Spaniards or Americans. The object of this campaign is to get the Jews out of the drygoods business—why, a brief account of what they have done to it will make obvious.

Jewish migrations to Mexico began when the quota laws were passed by the United States. In August, 1924, General Plutarco Elias Calles issued as president-elect an invitation to Jews detained in European ports; he offered consular facilities, reduced railroad fares, and a welcome, requiring only that immigrants obey Mexican laws. The invitation suggested that Jews engage in agriculture through colonies; it promised to help start such colonies, and added that there was also much room for small industries (cloaks, suits, shoes, etc.) and that the drygoods business was young.

Like most other enterprises in Mexico, except politics and farming, the drygoods business was almost entirely in the hands of foreigners, who dealt chiefly in foreign goods. Drygoods, clothing, hats, and cosmetics, were imported from France and sold by Frenchmen. Shoes and stockings came from the United States; woolens from the United States and England; hardware and machinery from Germany. Spaniards controlled the grocery and book trade. The native industries consisted chiefly of Indian crafts. There were a few textile, shoe and candy factories which, like larger enterprises in Mexico (oil, mines, fruit, coffee, beer, cigarettes) were owned and run by foreigners. Big retailers bought directly from foreign factories as wholesalers and sold themselves the goods. Small retailers bought from wholesalers sometimes local, who in turn may have bought from foreign middlemen—which method, what with fairly stiff tariffs and unfavorable exchange, brought the cost to about twice as much as American retailers are accustomed to pay for the same grade of merchandise. Local factories imported much of their material, and kept their prices just under the level of foreign merchandise. All retailers practised an old-fashioned system of business—markups yielding at least 100 per cent profit, usually more, on a strictly cash basis. Given the extreme poverty of Mexican masses, the pinched state of the lower middle class, and the uncertain pockets of government employees—a large proportion of Mexico City population—the clientele of the drygoods and clothing stores was limited to the prosperous, especially as no attempt was made to supply wares of a cheaper than medium grade.

Doubtless General Calles had these conditions in mind when he shrewdly welcomed the Jews. Proposed negotiations of his government with American Jewish organizations for the financing of agricultural colonies fell through, possibly because the Mexican agrarian problem was not then solved enough, nor is it yet. But the Jews did not wait. Thousands, mostly young men, sailed hopefully for Vera Cruz. Until 1927 the doors were wide open. Authorities asked no questions, barred none but the sick and criminals. After 1927 they asked questions, but stated no preference as to occupation, nationality, or religion. Recently, following American example, restrictions, questions, and requirements have multiplied. The bulk of the Jewish population arrived between 1924 and 1927; the incoming stream has since become a mere dribble, partly because of the change in laws,

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but more largely because of advice to stay away given by local Jews and by international Jewish organizations.

There are now from fifteen to twenty thousand Jews in Mexico. About half are European (Ashkenaizic) Jews—Russians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Checkoslovakians, Poles, Austrians, Germans, Russo-British; the other half are Oriental or Sephardic Jews—from Smyrna, Salonika, the Balkans. Some of these are French citizens. The majority of both kinds have become Mexican citizens. About three-fourths live and work in the capital and its surrounding Federal District. The rest are scattered; they peddle even in the remotest Indian villages.

Presumably these thousands were attracted by the variety of possible occupations pictured by General Calles, and by the guarantee of a friendly government. Certainly, too, by the proximity of the United States. Many took the land promise literally, and came enthusiastically determined to be farmers. But they found that if they had or could get money they could buy huge estates liable to be distributed among insistent agrarians; and if they had no money, they could farm on the Indian level—maize field, straw hut, fifty cents a day at best. In either case they would face intricate and dangerous problems.

Some of the stiffnecked, determined to farm, compromised by starting small dairies near the capital. Occasional jobs as foremen of estates in the hot country were also eagerly taken. A few of the very stubborn Jews turned peon and got malaria. The rest peddled. They peddled neckties, socks, stockings, scarves, knickknacks, saints. Then they enlarged their packs and sold clothing, drygoods, hardware. The less prosperous tried to get union cards; some did, and worked in factories. Others drove taxis. The more prosperous got market licenses and established themselves in booths at city markets. Others, with the aid of small loans from the B'nai B'rith, which was operating an emergency immigration station in Mexico City, opened small stores or "factories"—tailor, shoe, mattress, furniture, sweater—some of which have grown considerably. They sent for their families, or founded new ones.

Within seven years Mexico City has a Jewish "zone"—streets of Jesus Maria, La Santisima, Correo Mayor. There are Jewish residents on almost every street, kosher restaurants, butcher-shops, and delicatessens, a Young Mens' Hebrew Association, a Jewish charity organization, a Yiddish theatre, a newspaper, a Jewish Chamber of Commerce, the beginnings of a hospital—and an anti-Jewish campaign. The city also has a sweatered labor class, stenographers and middle class wives clad far more neatly, and a new class of manufacturers and merchants, who aim at providing cheap wares for the unprosperous. Small expenses for licenses and rental of booths, long hours, and shrewd buying directly from foreign or local factories, contribute to the Jews' success. But the decisive factors are the two radical innovations which have revolutionized the drygoods business—small profits on large sales, and the introduction of a retail credit system and installment plan. The markets have been transformed into open air department stores, prices have gone way down, and the number of buyers has gone way up. Furthermore, some of the old customers of the large stores have shifted their patronage to the markets and to installment-plan peddlers.

Obviously the department stores, and the shoe and hat stores accustomed to the old system of buying and selling, do not like it. Neither do the shoe factories and tailor shops which have to compete with the Jews' cheaper products. It is true that several of the large importers sell considerable amounts wholesale to Jewish retailers, but they cannot be otherwise than irritated when the Jews sell this merchandise for much less than the retail departments of these importers. As a rule, however, the class of merchandise handled by Jews is below the quality of the class offered by department stores; but the rub lies in the fact that far more people in Mexico will buy cheaper goods, because few can afford better.

Came Depression. Came the drop of silver, hitting importers squarely in the diaphragm; and the Jews, producing locally, went cheerfully on, pulling down prices and making money at it. The old guard, unwilling to adopt the Jewish system, aghast at the thought of cutting their own prices, establishing credit, selling on installments, timid about advertising—in short, unable to compete intelligently—looked around for another solution. Then came the expulsion from the United States of thousands of Mexicans, causing an uneasy, humiliated anger and forecasting serious unemployment problems. As an expression of both, Guatemalan workers were expelled from southern Mexico and the press grumbled about the Jews. Meanwhile American tariff laws were creating in Mexico, as elsewhere in the world, a bristling, desperate nationalism, in Mexico aggravated by the silver problem, the unemployment problem, the agrarian problem, the labor problem, the collapse of oil and mining, and the familiar, heartbreaking misery of the majority of the population.

Brave but inadequate remedies developed: the pushing of roadbuilding, the soothing of agrarians, the encouragement of tourist travel; the Chambers of Commerce campaigned for the slogan "Consume National Products." The irritated French, Spanish, and German shoemen, hatmen, drygoods, clothing, and hardware merchants dovetailed this praiseworthy movement into another, labelled, "Buy From Mexicans—Boycott the Jews." They began by organizing numerous *Ligas*—such as the League of Shoemakers and Tanners, the League of Mexican Bazaars, the League of Small Merchants Adhering to the National Revolutionary Party—the membership of which is made up chiefly of employees of the large enterprises, the owners of smaller enterprises, and a minority of Mexican peddlers and small business men, who followed the Jewish example of taking novel wares into the streets and markets, but who, with less business experience and much competition, were not as successful as they had hoped. Some of these *Ligas*—for example, that of the shoemakers—are enormous numerically; others have no membership beyond an organizer and his committee of agitators.

Propaganda in the form of "manifestos," placards, pamphlets, and megaphone men appeared in the markets and streets. The press, especially the *Nacional Revolucionario*, official organ of the official National Revolutionary Party, gave ear to these clamors. The Jews were accused: (1) of having entered Mexico under false pretenses—promising to work the soil, and then engaging in other occupations; (2) of "disloyal" commerce, selling below cost, wholesale smuggling, stealing, and fraudulent bankruptcies; (3) of exploiting Mexican labor, even of torturing Mexican labor—one Jew was said to hang his girl clerk up by the thumbs—of

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not hiring Mexican labor, of cheating their customers, of not paying taxes, of snatching bread out of Mexican mouths; (4) of living in poverty, of getting rich and sending their money to Palestine; (5) of sinister designs on the future welfare of the nation. The government was petitioned: (1) to expel all the Jews; (2) to cancel all Mexican citizenships extended to Jews; (3) to force them all to become farmers; (4) to cancel Jewish peddlers' licenses and expel Jews from the markets; (5) to restrict Jewish immigration.

Political sponsorship of the anti-Jewish campaign was arranged with Deputy Angel (angel) Ladrón (thief) de Guevara, ex-general, representative from the Federal District in the National Chamber of Deputies, prominent in the National Revolutionary Party and said to be "close to Calles." Promptly the manifestos, pamphlets, and threats multiplied; a violently anti-Jewish sheet called *La Voz del Comercio* was distributed, along with the other literature, from the offices of the Federal District Deputation in the National Revolutionary Party headquarters. And letters on National Revolutionary Party stationery, signed Ladrón de Guevara, asking how much the Jews would pay to stop the campaign, were received by several local Jews with presumably likely bank accounts. The letters were not answered.

Then immigration authorities at Vera Cruz began to get nasty to Jews; Jewish peddlers' licenses were cancelled, and all Jews, Mexican citizenship notwithstanding, were expelled from the big drygoods and clothing market, *La Lagunilla,* under rulings stated to be for the purpose of clearing the markets for homecoming Mexicans expelled from the United States, and of enforcing market regulations which provided that no merchant with more than three hundred pesos (under $150) worth of goods be allowed to deal there. All Jews were said to have violated this regulation. No Mexican or non-Jewish foreign violators were discovered.

To celebrate the exodus, a mass meeting was held by the anti-Jewish *Ligas*. Anti-Jewish placards decorated the locale, anti-foreign and anti-Jewish speeches were made. The President, who attended, was oratorically asked to "sink the national flag through the heart of Israel." Deputy Ladrón de Guevara received a gold medal from one of these *Ligas,* "for his patriotic work in initiating the nationalistic campaign." The medal was pinned on him by amiable President Ortiz Rubio himself, who apparently was present under the impression that the meeting was "pro-National Commerce," and who doubtless didn't see or hear anything naughty, because in answer to an inquiry from this correspondent he telegraphed that there was no anti-foreign campaign in Mexico.

Interviewed, the talkative Deputy stated to this correspondent, and to a representative of the New York *Evening Post,* that his campaign was directed "against all the children of Israel." Asked whether he thought they were all bad, he answered, either tactlessly or because he doesn't know a Jew when he sees one, that he thought they mostly were. Asked what precisely he expected to do to them, he said, "Send them all out of the country. I've already had the pleasure of personally expelling them from the markets." Asked how he was going to accomplish his object, he said the President would sign decrees of expulsion for them all. Asked what he would do if the President did not, he said, "I'll apply direct action; after all I'm a Deputy and can't be thrown in jail." Asked who his allies in this campaign were, he said, "the National government, the Federal District government, and the National Revolutionary Party." He also named several large department stores. Asked how long it would take to expel the Jews, he said, "Within sixty days Mexico will be clear of them."

His activity, stretching over a period of several months, reached a climax June 1 with the organization of a monster parade, intended to show the government how much Mexicans hate Jews. The Jewish zone prepared itself for a pogrom. Anonymous letters threatening forcible expulsion and "suppression" were received by some; and the memory of blackmail attempted by an industrious ex-general named Viguri V, upon others, plus multiplied and more violent placards, megaphone men offering "a nickel for every blow at a Jew," and a new and very wild issue of *La Voz del Comercio* headlined "Jew—On Your Way," portended a near and dreadful fate to the excited immigrants, many of whom have experienced persecution on the European plan.

The President was asked to decree the Day of Commerce—invented for the parade—a national holiday. University students, discovering a receipt for a thousand pesos given by a prominent drygoods and clothing firm to one of the signers of anti-Jewish placards, protested. The Jews protested. One or two diplomats tactfully regretted. Queried for comment, General Calles did not reply. However, the holiday was not decreed, but permission was given for the parade, and an imposing number of *gendarmes* turned out with fixed bayonets to keep it peaceful. Nothing happened. Twenty thousand, it has been calculated, overalled "business men" marched down the main boulevard and through the heart of the city, carrying signs in most of which the word Jew had been hastily and visibly exchanged for "Bad merchant," "Pernicious stranger," "Invader," and, innocently, "Israelite."

Delegations which petitioned Mexico's cultured, amused Foreign Minister, Señor Genaro Estrada, to cancel the citizenships of Jews, were told that the citizenships were legally issued and would not be cancelled, and were informed that delegations with petitions like theirs ought to know that they were being used as tools by other foreigners. Then the able Secretary of the Interior, Señor Carlos Riva Palacio, interviewed by this correspondent, declared that immigrants engaging in other occupations than those described upon entry were violating no law, and would not be expelled unless they violate one. He declared, furthermore, that the government did not endorse the anti-Jewish campaign, and that the Deputy engaged in it represented no part of the government except himslf.

These declarations, headlined in the leading daily, *Excelsior,* cleared the air and reduced the anti-Jewish bogey to less alarming proportions. Later, representatives of the shoemakers, a majority of the paraders, politely begged this correspondent to note that Deputy Ladrón de Guevara was not empowered to talk or act for them, and as for them, they were only against foreigners engaged in the shoe business, guilty of selling too cheap; they calculated there were about thirty thousand such, whom they called Jews because that was the Spanish idiom for bad merchants, and they asserted that they were not anti-foreign at all; in fact there were lots of foreigners in their organization. Lots of Spani-

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ards. No Jews. They were thinking about taking in some Armenians.

Propaganda still simmers, and sometimes flares in the *Nacional Revolucionario* and minor yellow journals. Jews who can are leaving; others, pitiful and confused, make life complicated for the passport department at the American Consulate. Several hundred, still with peddling and market licenses cancelled, are out of work, and cannot seem to get any action from the Federal District government, which issues such permits. Those who have a little money migrate to nearby cities, where they are followed by propaganda and soon beset with difficulties; many are desperately hungry.

Help is expected from American Jewish organizations. An appeal has been made for emergency funds and for loans with which to establish ousted peddler and market Jews in small shops. The establishment of special markets for Jews has been suggested by government officials, but Jews here oppose the idea for fear of creating a ghetto, with its implication of danger. It is scarcely likely that they will be readmitted to their old corners, and even if petty officials should turn suddenly lenient, the reentry of Jews would provide a target for continued attack, which might otherwise possibly die down. It is also unfortunately possible that funds may still be forthcoming for the generals in this little war, and eventually the foreign patriots who back it may persuade the impulsive Mexican masses that foreign merchants who sell cheaply on the installment plan personally murdered Christ and are to blame for the evils of this world; in which case Mexico will have her first pogrom since the Inquisition. And it won't be a little one either.

The Black Bugs

By HORACE R. CAYTON

I SAT eating in a small restaurant in the heart of the Black Belt of Chicago. As I finished my somewhat greasy steak and started on the "home-made apple pie," I chanced to look out of the window and saw a number of Negroes walking by, three abreast, forming a long uninterrupted line. What impressed me about them was not only that they were marching by in a serious and determined fashion, but the poverty of their dress and their unkempt condition. Not that it is unusual to see in any section of the Black Belt unkempt Negroes rubbing shoulders with the well-to-do "black bourgeois," but to see a whole orderly procession of them, to hear no loud laughs, no good-natured horseplay—well, that was different. The situation needed looking into.

On going outside I was informed that they were the "black bugs"—the Communists—the "black reds." Oh, so Mr. Fish and his calamity shouters were right. Indeed the Communists, it appeared, had been active with the black brethren. Here at last was a bit of concrete evidence that the fundamental institutions of the country were in danger. Here was evidence of the "red scare" which had kept many a corrupt municipal government, from New York to Seattle, in power a bit longer, and delayed grand jury investigations. I would accompany this band of black demons too, if not to protect our glorious institutions, at least to see them in part destroyed. I fell into line and marched.

Turning to my marching companion I asked where we were headed for, and what we would do when we got there. He looked surprised, and told me we were marching down to put in a family who had been evicted from a house for not paying their rent. Things were awfully tough down in the Black Belt now, he continued, and jobs were impossible to get. The Negro was the first to be discharged and the last to be hired. Now with unemployment they were hungry, and if they were put out in the street their situation would be a desperate one. The Negroes of the community had been exploited for years by the unscrupulous landlords who had taken advantage of prejudice compelling the Negroes to live only in that district, and had forced them to pay exorbitant rents. Now, continued my informer, hard times had hit them and they were being turned out into the street. Furthermore, as the Negroes did not know their legal rights, the landlords would simply pitch their few belongings out of the window with no legal procedure at all. They, the Communists, were going to see that the people were not treated in this fashion.

Need I say that my reaction was one of surprise and disappointment? Instead of trying to destroy our splendid and glorious institutions, these poor black folks were simply going over to put a fellow race member back into the house he had been unceremoniously kicked out of. This was indeed a come-down for one who had expected to witness the destruction of constitutional American principles, such as, for example, "due process of law."

We finally came to a dirty, ill-kept street of houses. The first part of our line had arrived ahead, and had successfully put back into the house the few miserable belongings of the evicted tenants. The woman of the house was standing, surrounded by a group of "black reds," intermittently crying and thanking God, loudly and dramatically. Her audience was very responsive, and seemed about to break into shouts itself. It was pathetic to see this old black woman thanking God for aid which came in the form of a group of so-called Communists—and the emotional responses of the Communists themselves reminded me more of a camp fire meeting than a mob of angry "reds." Evidently not all Communists, at least not all black Communists, are atheists.

Suddenly a shout went around that there was another family in the next street that had been put out, and the procession started in that direction. This time I was far in the front to see the fun. We were met at the street by two squad cars of police who asked us where we were going. The black crowd swarmed around the officers and their cars like a hive of bees around their queen. The officers jumped out of their cars and told the crowd to move on. No one moved. Everyone simply stood and stared at them. One officer lost his head and drew his gun, leveling it at the crowd.

Then a young fellow stepped out of the crowd and said, "You can't shoot all of us and I might as well die

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now as any time. All we want is to see that these people, our people, get back into their homes. We have no money, no jobs, and sometimes no food. We've got to live some place. We are just acting the way you or anyone else would act."

The officer looked at the boy, at the crowd, and the crowd looked at him. No threats, no murmurs, no disorder; the crowd just looked at him. There the officer stood, surrounded by a crowd of dirty, ragged Negroes with a sea of black eyes on him. The officer replaced his gun in his holster and stood looking.

In the back of the crowd some one got up on a soap box and started to speak. It was an old, wild-eyed, hag-like woman. The crowd turned and listened to her.

I have heard lots of radicals talk. I have attended the meetings of Anarchists, Socialists, I. W. W.s and Communists. I understand, more or less, the rituals of Karl Marx, Lenin, and the rest. I am familiar with the usual harangue of the "soap boxer"—but this was different. This woman was not talking about any economic principles; she was not talking about any empty theories, nor was she concerned with some abstract Utopia to be gained from the movement of the "lower classes." She was talking about bread, and jobs, and places to sleep in. It was the talk of a person who had awakened from a pleasant dream to find that reality was hard, cold, and cruel.

Then I realized that all these people had suddenly found themselves face to face with hard, cold reality. They were the people who a few years ago had migrated from the South, in wagons, in cars, in trains, even walking. They had migrated with songs and hymns on their lips—with prayers to the Almighty for deliverance. They had come to the North and had been welcomed. Ah, America's great pool of unskilled labor was tapped; they had been sent to help win the war. But pretty soon the war was over. And, later still, the good times and prosperity were over. With hard times they had felt the pinch of poverty, and now they were virtually starving to death in the paradise of a few years ago.

The talk went on. The crowd stood and listened. It had grown bigger now and many white faces were seen. The officers stood and listened. I don't believe that there was any one there who was not touched by the talk. I don't believe that there was anybody there, white or black, who did not in some degree face the same situation that she was so vividly describing. Even the officers stood with more or less respectful attention. I spoke to one of the officers and asked if he didn't think it was a shame to put people out of their houses when they were in such desperate circumstances. He answered that it was tough, yet a man didn't build a house for charity—but it didn't make any difference to him as long as they started no trouble.

Just then a siren was heard—the whisper went around—the riot squad was coming!

"Hold your places, comrades," shouted the woman speaker.

"Act like men," came back from the crowd.

All of the spectators stepped back, and the active participants formed a small nucleus around the speaker—packed in tight—a solid black lump of people. Two young fellows stood holding the woman up on the soap box in the middle.

Then the riot squad turned into the street, four cars full of blue-coated officers and a patrol wagon. They jumped out before the cars came to a stop and charged down upon the crowd. Night sticks and "billies" played a tattoo on black heads.

"Hold your places," shouted the woman.

"Act like men," answered the crowd.

They stood like dumb beasts—no one ran, no one fought or offered resistance, just stood, an immovable black mass. Finally the officers were through, and started to pull down the woman speaker. Clubs came down in a sickening rain of blows on the woolly head of one of the boys who was holding her up. Blood spurted from his mouth and nose. Finally she was pulled down. A tremor of nervousness ran through the crowd. Then someone turned and ran. In a minute the whole group was running like mad for cover. One of the officers shot twice at one of the boys who had been holding up the woman speaker. The boy stumbled, grabbed his thigh, but kept on running. The woman was struggling in the arms of two husky policemen. It was all over in a minute, and all that was left was the soap box and the struggling black woman. I turned and left. Tomorrow I will perhaps read in the paper that a "red riot" was stopped only with the intervention of a number of officer; that "red" agitation among the Negroes is on the increase; that Mr. Fish, Mr. Hearst, and Mr. Jimmie Walker were right—American institutions really are in danger.

In the Driftway

WITH the great American passion for framing lists—The Ten Greatest Thinkers, the Ten Greatest Poets (vide Will Durant's latest opus), The Ten Greatest Living American Women, and so on and on, the Drifter wonders why he has not yet seen any list of The Ten Most Obnoxious Words. Most persons, the Drifter imagines, if asked to compile such a list, would be embarrassed. For most of them would suppose that they were being called upon to set down the words which each of us has been taught to believe are so obnoxious to all the rest of us—those four-letter Anglo-Saxon words celebrated by Joyce in "Ulysses" and Lawrence in "Lady Chatterley's Lover," and sometimes used in private conversation by less distinguished persons. Any one of candor, however, or at least (what is sometimes the same thing) any one capable of recognizing what his own feelings and emotions really are, as distinguished from those that are generally considered estimable or appropriate, will probably admit that most of these words are not really revolting to him. On the contrary, they are precisely the words that come to his lips spontaneously, and even irresistibly, when he has lost his temper; which clearly shows that, so far from being distasteful to him, they give him a curious satisfaction that no other words in the whole English language, in just that situation, could provide.

* * * * *

THE officially obnoxious words, in short, are seldom the personally obnoxious ones. The words that annoy and irritate one personally will depend to a large extent on one's temperament, and on the nature of one's experience and in-

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terests. If the Drifter were to compile a personal list, for example, it would certainly include such words as *creative, organic, dynamic, vital, complex, and psychosis.* The Drifter is willing to admit that his distaste for these words is sometimes an irrational one, for each of them surely has an entirely legitimate use. It is when they are used pretentiously, honorifically, and vaguely, as they are coming increasingly to be, that they arouse the Drifter's ire. Why must every person with a sense of inferiority now be described as having an inferiority *complex?* In nine cases out of ten the word *complex* adds nothing but the self-conscious intimation that the person using it knows a thing or two about psychoanalysis. Why are so many writers convinced that they have said something profoundly significant when they are told us that we must take an *organic* view of this or that subject? Why? . . . But the Drifter is becoming indignant, and indignation is alien to his nature. THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

France Does Not Want War

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: No, France does not want war. There are Marins and Maurrases in France: but they are not "France": they are not even "official France." Official France is Briand, and Maurras is openly calling for his assassination. The failure of liberals in this country to understand and support the most conciliatory of European statesmen is a tragedy.

We must strive to escape from nationalistic thinking. Mr. Dell and *The Nation* are not against France: they are with Leon Blum, with Daladier (!), with Barbusse, with Rolland, just as much as they are against Hitler or Pilsudski.

What is to be done? Certainly not to attempt to coerce or isolate France: but to attempt to understand. I, as a pacifist and as an internationalist, can see much that is reasonable in her contentions. Meet her reasonable demands: the unreasonable ones will fall of their own weight. The cry for *security* is not hysterical: we must have an organized world if we truly want disarmament and peace. So long as we are out of the Court and out of the League, we are giving an example of "sacred egoism" which strengthens the "sacred egoism" of others. The mote and the beam: at present, we, who officially stand for international *anarchy* (in the literal sense of the word), are the obstacle. If Mr. Hoover hopes to settle the disarmament and the financial problems without international commitments, he is bound to fail.

I heartily agree with the conclusions of Mr. Robert Dell: the principle of equality would appeal to the sense of logic and fairness of the French. I am surprised we are not working it up for all it is worth: here at last is a definite, positive suggestion. Peace can not be based on supremacy: neither French supremacy on land, nor Anglo-Saxon supremacy on the high seas. We, who obviously do not need as large a navy as Great Britain, have claimed and secured parity. Italy, whose colonial interests are trifling compared with those of France, is claiming parity with France. Germany will be satisfied with nothing less. The principle of equality is absurd if you like: but it is workable. What are the alternatives? A race for armaments, and the survival of the fittest? We have tried that way: it leads to Hell. An adjudication of the "needs" of each nation? By whom, and on what basis? Do you think that America would stand for a moment a definition of her "needs" by an international body? The Washington method: "freezing" armaments, not at their present level, but in their present proportions? Aye: but that should work both ways: if it consecrates the naval supremacy of France? And is not that exactly what we are seeking to avoid?

Let us *all* reduce to a common level—say, for a start, the one imposed upon Germany by the Versailles treaty. Both Mr. Hoover and Mussolini have said emphatically that no figure was too low for them—provided no one else was entitled to a larger one. This means the total abandonment of the "Britania rule the waves" policy and the two-power naval standard. Messrs. MacDonald, Baldwin, and Lloyd George united recently in a demonstration against excessive armaments: are they willing to accept the consequences?

The French are not ghouls: they are clear thinking people. They will never understand why we should insist upon disarmament without mutual guarantees; and why France should give up her military superiority whilst England would be confirmed in her naval superiority. Meet these two problems: America's (alleged) refusal to cooperate, England's reluctance to admit other nations to full equality, and the French difficulties will be automatically settled.

Stanford University, Cal., August 5 ALBERT GUÉRARD

West Virginia Coal Mines

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I have just completed a health study for the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, of the children of the coal miners of the West Virginia Miners' Union. In Ward, where work has been fairly steady, I found that the average weight for all the children was 12 per cent below the standard and that a diet consisting of pinto beans, potatoes and sow belly (salt pork) had resulted in lowered resistance to all types of infection such as colds, middle ear infections, and tonsilitis. In Gallagher, where work was not steady, conditions were far worse. There was, for example, a higher incidence of such preventable diseases as scarlet fever, diphtheria, and typhoid.

There is an attempt on the part of the public school authorities in these mining camps to provide inoculation against preventable diseases, but the children of the miners are unable to attend school after the first few weeks of autumn because they have no shoes for the long hikes to the school building. As a consequence they receive none of the benefits of public health service as carried out in the school. None of the children I examined had been given milk of any kind after they were weaned, nor had they known fresh meat or vegetables except on very rare occasions. Their only change from the diet described above was berries gathered from the woodlands near their camp.

The average family in Gallagher consists of seven persons; in Ward, of nine, due to the fact that the mothers in Gallagher are younger than those in Ward. It is taken for granted that a woman should have a child every year.

There is a direct connection between undernourishment, low wages, irregular work and indecent living conditions. The incidence of typhoid and dysentery is far beyond the statistics of any civilized community, because of the pollution of water supplied by the coal companies. The water supply in Gallagher comes from a source immediately adjacent to outhouses used by the miners.

When the miners are working, there is left a budget of 77 cents per person a week for food and clothing for the people of Ward, and 71 cents for those of Gallagher. From the miners' pay, which is in the form of scrip currency redeemable only at the company stores, there is checked by the operators

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$2 a month for the pay of company doctors (who, by the way, are shunned by the coal diggers in most instances); $1.50 for hospital charges, $1 for burial expenses, and a charge for powder, tools, and timber used in extracting coal. The average total left for miners, after a two weeks' shift, comes to less than $25, from which the rent for living in company houses and the debt from dealing at company stores are subtracted, so that in many instances the unorganized miner finds that he is in debt to the company for from $7 to $17 as a result of his labor.

The miners in both towns have never been able to afford the luxuries of ice, proper screens, and other preventives against infection. As a result the resistance to infectious disease among the children is startlingly low, so that there is a mortality of one in every five children, and among those who survive preventable diseases are notably rife. An entire generation of the children of American citizens engaged in the production of a basic commodity for power-civilization is being reared among conditions which inevitably lead to feebleness, degeneration and crime.

The most direct way to help the striking miners in their struggle for decent conditions is by contributing funds through the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief at 112 East 19th Street, New York City. Make checks payable to the committee or to Forrest Bailey, Treasurer.

New York City, August 6 DR. RUTH FOX

The Disarmament Question

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Last week 10,000 people packed Albert Hall and listened to eloquent speeches by Premier MacDonald, Lloyd George, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, and others in behalf of disarmament. The United States does not yet seem to be as thoroughly aroused as England on this commanding issue. In spite of President Hoover's moratorium proposal, the world situation is perilous and the trouble from which Europe is suffering will not be cured merely by financial settlement. The most important element in bringing about the confidence which breeds prosperity will be a drastic cut in armaments.

World conditions are changing with startling rapidity and world statesmanship has not kept pace with the movement. The United States has a great opportunity to help. In January, 1931, twenty-two European nations united in declaring that they were "resolutely determined to use the machinery of the League to prevent any resort to violence." This declaration should now be followed by a statement from President Hoover, before the opening of the Disarmament Conference next February to the effect that the forces of the United States will never be employed to interfere with the machinery of the League when that is used to prevent resort to violence. If any nation is fearful, that nation will feel less suspicious and vastly more secure, if it has assurance that in case of any possible outbreak in defiance of the Paris Pact, America would give no credit to the aggressor, would refuse to sell her munitions, and if she remained hostile, would break off relationship with her. Such an assurance would profoundly affect the attitude of mind at the Disarmament Conference.

What would such a declaration cost us? Practically nothing; but our government, although aware of a keen desire for peace, has been silent and not said the necessary helpful word. America is not yet fully aroused to the frightful danger to civilization if the representatives of practically all the nations of the world assemble at Geneva next February and are not able to work together for reductions in all kinds of ships, munitions and forces, together with adequate budgetary limitation. Unless some such action is taken and unless the pledges of 1919 are redeemed, prosperity cannot return to a world that refuses to be sane, but instead is headed toward internal convulsions and catastrophe. The hour has struck for definite and far-reaching action. The Soviet government has a plan; whether bad or good, it is a definite plan. The western world has not evolved one. It is staggering on hardly knowing what it can do or ought to do, and is bound to fall unless it has a plan. No nation can do more than ours to help that plan evolve.

London, July 20 LUCIA AMES MEAD

Harlem Gets a New Jail

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The pompous dedication on July 14 of the new Thirty-second Police Precinct on the main crosstown thoroughfare of colored Harlem, amid the crashing cymbals of the Police Brass Band, was a damning commentary upon the government of New York City under the present administration. Summoned by the blare of trumpets, thousands of Harlem's unemployed blocked the squalid street of the new jail, richly festooned at city expense for the Roman holiday. The city's chiefs and their entourages to the number of scores, in their limousines, combined to stop traffic, in order that the mayor and his minions down to the alderman and aspiring local candidates could all join in the spectacle. The dignitaries of the section joined with the celebrated functionaries in their raucous, megaphoned, radioed speeches to the assembled throngs, and dined sumptuously on the banquet viands—all at the expense of the city treasury. But to what purpose was all this celebration? Had it been in celebration of a new public school, library, hospital; had it signalized the cleaning up of this frightfully neglected section, with its disgraceful parkways and dirty streets, which constitute a menace to the health of its citizens and the city; had it been to open up a great employment program to give Harlem's impoverished and underprivileged workers a chance to earn a living, this lavish expenditure, while foolish, could have been understood. But this was not the occasion of the monster spectacle. It was to launch Tammany's campaign. How? By dedicating a jail!

We have recently sought in vain to bring to the attention of the city the dangerous health conditions in this great black community. The new jail itself with its greatly enlarged facilities tells the story of increased misery and crime in this congested region. The back yards of the dilapidated old-law flats and ancient private houses which surround the new bastile are piled high with reeking refuse. The courts, cellars, and areaways of all Harlem are live plague spots overrun with rats and vermin—nauseating the lodgers until shades must be drawn to avoid the sight and windows must be closed during these sweltering summer dog days to exclude the smell. Two-thirds of the dumbwaiters in Harlem flats are out of commission. Garbage from the top to the bottom floor is thrown down the shaft as a necessity by the householders, making the entire shaft a disease- and germ-breeding tract and the bottom of the shaft a live bed of filth. The resulting swarms of vermin presage an early arrival of malaria, diphtheria, measles, and smallpox unless heroic preventive methods are speedily adopted. With every tenement and health ordinance violated with impunity, both by landlords and lodgers, Harlem naturally constitutes a health menace not only to itself but to the city.

Why does the city government not remove the causes of Harlem's crime record by giving thousands of its unemployed work in cleaning up the section? Instead, it dedicates a jail and squanders thousands in the dedication!

New York, August 1 GEORGE W. HARRIS

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Books

The Logic of the Rose

By LANCELOT DENT

Consider the sweet mystery of the rose,
How reasonably its petals presuppose
The limpid universals it selects,
Repelling all the others it rejects
So timelessly, till come untimely shears.
It is the perfect thing that it appears,
Yet holding undissolved for God to see
Its own precise particularity.

Change and Fixity in the Law

Law and the Modern Mind. By Jerome Frank. Brentano's. $4.

DISCUSSION of our political life cannot have much reality while we talk of democracy and the will of the people, and our actual government remains an irresponsible judicial aristocracy. A small number of judges can, under the guise of interpreting the law, settle for a long time any vital issue in accordance with their own class bias or antiquated opinion as to social and economic needs. In the progressive *ante bellum* days, proposals were discussed for the recall of judicial decisions and for other ways of making the law more responsive to the present-day interests of the majority of the people. But the leaders of the American Bar, either because they feared the removal of issues from the field of their professional power to the political forum where the wishes of *hoi polloi* might count, or else because they really did not know any better, began a campaign of "education" and "sold" to the public the idea that the courts have nothing to do with making and changing the law. This theory of a complete Law that speaks into the mind of the judge, who like a phonograph does nothing but repeat it, had frequently been shown by intelligent jurists since the days of Austin to be a fiction. But the prestige of the leaders of our bar, the desertion of the progressive cause by Roosevelt, and the general shadow of the oncoming War made this fiction prevail, and it still holds the fort as our orthodox national myth.

Mr. Frank's book is, therefore, of importance as a valiant attack on the orthodox position, by a keen lawyer who knows the ropes and brings to his aid an unusually varied learning, including the fashionable form of psychoanalysis.

Having in my own way for over eighteen years fought against this citadel of legal unreason, my inclinations are naturally to hail Mr. Frank as an ally in a righteous cause. Also because Mr. Frank is a highly esteemed friend, it would be pleasant to dwell on the great merits of this book and its timeliness. But others have already done so, and the public has so approved its readable quality as to put it already into a second printing. It seems to me, therefore, more useful to point out why, though the author's heart is in the right place and his courage most admirable, he is not likely to disturb the enemy very seriously. The book is not well organized, the shots are often carelessly fired and wide of the mark, many of the shells are duds and some may act like boomerangs. This friendly criticism of an ally is all the more necessary because these defects are characteristic of our young liberals who, though they talk much about science and the methods of science, woefully neglect the art of close reasoning and seldom trouble to produce logically conclusive evidence for their contentions.

Mr. Frank's book is not well organized. The various chapters are rather loosely strung together, and the subject matter is distributed without any careful plan among them, as well as among sixty-two pages of miscellaneous appendices, and thirty pages more of notes in addition to footnotes. Mr. Frank confuses his references, fails to do justice to the authorities he quotes, and in moments of illumination makes wise qualifications in footnotes which he subsequently ignores in the text. These are in themselves minor matters. Mr. Frank is a busy lawyer, and we should be grateful for the labor, often useful and illuminating, which he has from time to time devoted to this book. But unfortunately the outer lack of order is correlated with a failure to think through what he ultimately wants to say.

His central aim is to deny the complete certainty of the law. Does Mr. Frank, however, wish to rush to the other extreme and, substituting one childish simplicity for another, maintain that there is no certainty in the law at all? Here we have a regrettable lack of clarity. An affirmative answer to the last question is logically involved in his extreme nominalism or denial of rules, which he develops in his unfortunate polemics against Pound, Jhering and Dickinson (e. g. pp. 156, 217). Thus he quotes with approval Dean Green's categoric assertion that "the control of judges is not to be found in rules," (p. 283)—a recklessly anarchic statement which ignores the daily experienced necessity for rules as checks not only on judges but on the ignorance and bias of all private as well as public agents. It ignores also the ever pressing need of uniformity in various phases of modern life.

Mr. Frank, however, has no clear idea as to what he is thus committing himself to; and elsewhere, especially in footnotes, he explicitly recognizes the existence and need of some rules and certainty in the law. This admission, however, still leaves his fundamental thesis rather vague and inconsequential, and his polemics pointless if not unfair. For obviously, if the law contains both rules and discretion, both certainty and uncertainty, the significant issue is precisely the one that Dean Pound faces and that Mr. Frank dodges, viz., where to draw the line between legal rule and judicial discretion. Without such a line there cannot be much definite meaning in Mr. Frank's contention that he is arguing only against the conventional *exaggeration* of the importance of rule and certainty. We cannot tell that any one has exaggerated unless we have measured or at least estimated the *correct* amount. But such a task seems so uncongenial to Mr. Frank that he is most unfair in his attack on Pound's effort in that direction. To grant that Pound has not adequately solved that most difficult problem would not justify Mr. Frank's argument here. The latter, if generalized, would deny the distinction between day and night, by asking where in the twilight zone we are to draw the line where one ends and the other begins. No one can well deny Pound's contention that the field of property and contract is full of exact rules, such as the legal rate of interest, the age of contractual responsibility, the number of witnesses necessary for a will, and thousands of similar rules.

Again, Mr. Frank has not faced clearly the essential question as to whether the central phenomenon which he is examining, viz., the craving for certainty, is found only in the law or whether it exists also in other fields, e. g., in medicine. He begins his book as if he were dealing with something peculiar to the law, something that explains the anomalous position of the lawyer in the community. His explanation, however, is in terms of a supposed general fact of human nature—the reliance of the child on the authority of the father. This is certainly contrary to all canons of scientific procedure. For if the cause is general, it ought to manifest itself in all fields of human life,

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and if the effect is special to the law, there must be special causes that Mr. Frank has not faced.

There can be no doubt that the desire for complete certainty—the craving for absolute truth—is a trait of all creatures born of woman. Does not Mr. Frank himself believe that his formula, that the law is a *growing* or changing affair, is the real or absolute truth? Or does he expect that tomorrow it *may* be proved once for all that the law *is* a fixed and eternally unchanging system? Mr. Frank does not really face the theoretical and practical conditions of this craving for, and assumption of, absolute knowledge, because of his preoccupation with his pet theory that in the legal field this craving is due to a transference of father-authority to the Law personified. This theory is neither plausible in itself nor is there anything like scientific evidence offered for its adequacy. In every community there are a number of people who for some reason or other have never had a chance to rely on paternal authority. Is there any evidence that they demand less certainty of the law than do the others? Again, when youth ceases to respect paternal authority and relegates it to the realm of Victorianism or old-fogeyism, *does* it transfer its old awe to the law? Or is not the law also apt to be viewed as absurd by rebellious youth? And if men begin to rely more on routine as they grow older and have less zest for adventure, why drag in the notion of a father-substitute?

Mr. Frank protests—perhaps too much—that his psychoanalytic explanation is only a partial one, and at times he calls it a fiction. It is hard in view of the confidence he shows in this explanation to make out exactly what he means by its partiality or its fictional character. His complacent assumption that psychoanalytic concepts like father-substitution are "the best instruments now available for the study of human nature," begs more than he or any one else has as yet proved. Psychoanalysis has doubtless led to some therapeutic results. But so have Christian Science and other faith-cures, and a logician must contend that therapeutic efficiency does not prove the truth of all the different faiths that produce it. Psychoanalysis will become scientific only when, like biology, it becomes really critical of its own evidence, instead of resenting—as all sectarian faiths do—the demand for such evidence. In any case a little more scientific modesty as to the adequacy of his psychology would have saved Mr. Frank from the ridiculous procedure of trying to dispose of Jhering's effort to determine the certain element in the law by calling it "childish." Mr. Frank's categoric denial of the postulate of "a universe completely governed by discoverable unchanging law," involves an absolute knowledge for all future time. Would it be fair to call *him* childish for that? Despite the fashionable modernistic logicians whom Mr. Frank follows too blindly, the attempt to refute a man's views by inventing pejorative psychogenetic accounts of them remains the fallacy recognized and named by the old text-books. It is especially bad grace to apply a quasi-abusive epithet like "childish" to Jhering, who in his famous essay *Im Begriffshimmel* has anticipated all that is sound in Mr. Frank's arguments against undue certainty in the law. Jhering, however, was too sound a jurist to forget that the real problem is to find the precise relation between the certain and the uncertain elements in the law.

It may perhaps be unfair to judge Mr. Frank's book by a standard of logical rigor not generally applied to books written for the general public. But as Mr. Frank is engaged in a serious and important task, it must in the interest of the latter be pointed out that the myth of a completely certain legal system, apart from the work of judges—a myth which has its roots in legal experience from time immemorial—cannot be overthrown by an admitted fiction from the mushroom science of psychoanalysis. The myth is in fact, like other persistent human beliefs, a half-truth, and its error cannot be overthrown unless we recognize the part of it which is based on the impregnable rock of logical truth.

In the interest of general sanity, which liberals ought not to ignore, we should note that the desire for undue simplicity is not restricted to Platonists and scholastics (epithets never used in a derogative sense except by those who are woefully ignorant of the writings of Plato and of Thomas Aquinas). It characterizes all those who glibly assume that a world of change must exclude all constancy, and that the reality of particulars is inconsistent with the reality of universals. In this respect Mr. Frank, like others, has been misled by the theologico-philosophic vagaries of Eddington as to the meaning of Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy. The latter principle is an empirical application to the electron of old truths as to the nature of measurement. But neither Heisenberg's principle nor the statistical view of nature can deny that different things have universal or common natures (that things come in *kinds*) and that science is a search for constant laws governing the changes of things.

If the natural human craving for certainty be childish, the complete denial of it would be complete madness. If I actually doubt that stones will continue to lie on the ground if undisturbed, that my body is material and that my fellow beings continue to exist, the latter will for their and my protection have to lock me up in some asylum. Mr. Frank is impressed with some of the harm of the pretended certainty of the law. He should reflect that modern life would be completely paralyzed without the constant effort to make the law more certain, so that people can know on what to rely in their enterprise. Uncontrolled discretion of judges would make modern complex life unbearable. Rightly does Mr. Frank hold up Justice Holmes as a mature mind on the bench. But that great jurist not only believes that there is certainty in the law but that it can and ought to be increased. At any rate his greatness as a judge is precisely in the preeminent way in which he distinguishes between the legal rule which limits the scope of his function and his own personal opinions.

MORRIS R. COHEN

The Sins of a Critic

Two Symphonies. By André Gide. Translated from the French by Dorothy Bussy. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

HIS enemies find in Gide the hypocrite; his friends the moralist. Many of those who know his work in the original believe that his criticism, only one volume of which has been translated, is more important than his fiction. His admirers—and I may say that I am among them—think his spirit has ranged further and stayed younger than that of any other living literary critic, that his criticism can be depended upon to seek out that which is essential and most deeply human, that his "classicism" is one of the most creative forces of our time. Above all, his admirers feel that his peculiar distinction lies in his way of emphasizing the *moral* content of literature, which comes from his well-known fascination with the problem of good and, especially, evil.

This volume is his eighth to be translated. Perhaps some general reflections on his work are now in order. Here are two *récits,* "Isabelle" (1911) and "The Pastoral Symphony" (1919). Both are written with the consummate finish and ingenuity that we expect of anything by Gide. And yet they are almost certain to prove a disappointment—perhaps a revelation—to his American reader. For however well-written, these are not living stories but fleshless, implausible specters of stories. Each is told in the first person and ends in the narrator's self-castigation. In "Isabelle' he is a romantic young writer and

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condemns himself for falling in love with a name. In "The Pastoral Symphony" he is a Protestant pastor and condemns himself, among other things, for frustrating the young love of his son and his blind ward, for his arid heart, and even for his care-worn face. Each story ends upon a note of didacticism—as a last resort: to redeem it, to pull it together, to give it an individual tone. For similar reasons a few stray ends are deliberately left untied. The result is that everything is enveloped in a cloud of false mystery.

Both stories are heavy with the author's guilt. And no wonder. For in pinning together these skeletons Gide has committed sins that as a critic he would be the first to decry. Each is founded, not upon a real experience of life, but upon an all too "literary" idea. Each addresses itself almost solely to the intelligence. The characters in each are seldom more than reconciliations of the demands of plot and the demands of consistency. In every note of these unmusical "symphonies" we hear the overtone of self-consciousness. The author seems to glance over his shoulder as he clears the first hurdles of motivation, plausibility, coincidence, characterization; there is a worried look on his face. The hurdles ahead are higher and he begins knocking them down. Then, as though he were Zeus, he causes himself to be concealed in a cloud, and we cannot make out what he is doing. The mystery, we know, is false, but it is very thick. And when he appears in the open once more, at the finish, wearing a strained smile, we have no way of telling whether he ran around the remaining hurdles or climbed under them.

Some people wonder impiously why Gide writes fiction at all. They say that every page is tainted; and they are right. But they overlook that in addition to being a hypocrite, he is also a moralist. How could he be a moralist if he knew nothing about the function of evil? (For it is the function of evil that he understands, not evil itself. That is why he is equipped to be a critic, but not a novelist. That is why he is so good when he discusses the role that evil plays in Dostoevski's work, for example, while his own "Immoralist" is merely a studio sinner.) After all, he must have some experience of evil, if only a literary one. We are driven to the conclusion that the sins of this great critic are his "creations."

GERALD SYKES

Socialism, Red or White

Bolshevism at a Deadlock. By Karl Kautsky. Rand School Press. $1.75.

THE present writer approaches this volume in no little pain of spirit. Karl Kautsky was one of the teachers of his youth. "The Social Revolution and After" appealed to him as the very perfection of sound thinking in the economic field. But now, twenty-eight years later, old friends are parted, old gods are overthrown, and lie with their faces in the dust.

It would be interesting to take Kautsky's old-time prophecies of the social revolution, and compare them passage by passage with his repudiation of Bolshevism. It would be interesting as a psychological study of the effect of age upon the human mind. It would be interesting as a historical study, to trace the process whereby a leader of revolutionary theory has been brought into what seems, to at least one of his pupils, a completely counter-revolutionary attitude.

It was in 1906 or 1907 that I had with Kautsky a correspondence on the subject of my pamphlet, "War, a Manifesto Against It." I wanted all the Socialist parties of the world to form themselves into an international legislature to abolish war and pledge themselves to revolt against it. Kautsky said it could not be done—at least not by the Germans—their party would be wiped out by the government. Kautsky wrote me that he wanted an unsuccessful war for Germany. But seven years later, when the war came, Kautsky changed his mind, and decided that he wanted a successful war for Germany. When the Russian Bolsheviks hindered his new desire, he turned upon them in a rage, and now finds no language too strong to denounce them and all their works.

Soviet Russia is a fact of colossal significance and of colossal size. There are an infinite number of details to be observed, and without the slightest difficulty, one can select a particular set of details, and prove that Soviet Russia is anything one pleases. The Bolsheviks have obligingly provided Comrade Kautsky with sufficient unfavorable data to fill an encyclopedia. They practice what they call "self-criticism," washing all their dirty industrial and financial linen in public. Comrade Kautsky selects a few of the latest items, and by them proves exactly what he wants to prove.

He is sufficiently naive, or sufficiently considerate of the reader, to explain the principle upon which he has selected his facts. He knows *a priori* that there can be nothing good in this revolution, because it did not come according to the Marx-Kautsky formula. It ought to have come in a highly industrialized country like England or Germany; instead of which, it came in a primitive and backward country, and so it is "fantastic" and "impossible." Says Kautsky: "If Lenin is right, then my whole life's work devoted to the propagation, application and further development of the ideas of my great masters, Marx and Engels, has been in vain." And of course that cannot be.

In the same way Comrade Kautsky disposes of Russian "dumping" in one conclusive theoretical sentence: "This surplus has certainly not been as large as that promised in the Plan, for that is impossible." In this spirit he goes on to wave out of existence one department after another of the Russian endeavor. For example, he tells us that in Russia "The masses are perishing of famine and squalor." His book was published in Germany in the fall of 1930, but a preface to the English and American editions brings it up to January of the present year, and shows that Comrade Kautsky chose to pay no attention to the enormous harvest of the first year of collectivization.

And now the still greater harvest of the second year is rolling in, and the statement sounds even more absurd. Kautsky says: "In no circumstances will Soviet Russia be able to create agricultural large-scale production capable of survival. The attempt to conjure up thousands of big holdings overnight has merely resulted, and will continue to result, in the destruction of the soundest and most productive section of the peasant population." The answer to which is some thirteen million peasant households now in collectives, and a planted acreage ten per cent higher than last year.

One can go through this book, and take statement after statement which is thus contradicted by the impolite facts. One could have laugh after laugh over sentences in which an elderly German theorist—described on the jacket of his book as "the Foremost Marxian Theoretician of our Times"—waves out of existence by a formula the most colossal and significant developments of the modern world. Thus, for example: "What is the essence of the Five-Year Plan? Nothing but upsetting the balance between the various branches of production." This at a time when the triumph of the Five-Year Plan, in maintaining the balance between the various branches of production, has become the sensation of the capitalistic world!

There are two attitudes towards Soviet Russia struggling for prevalence in the Socialist movement. It is hard for thinkers who have based their movement upon democracy and liberty, not to be repelled by the idea of dictatorship. On the other hand, if one has to choose between permanent economic

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serfdom, and the temporary loss of the right to disobey orders, many Socialists, especially the younger ones in the movement, will choose the Soviet system as a lesser of two evils. But whatever the Socialists decide, they must bring themselves to face the facts; they must not lose themselves in a self-emitted fog, along with "the Foremost Marxian Theoretician of our Times."

UPTON SINCLAIR

World Cooperation

The Background of International Relations. By Charles Hodges. John Wiley and Sons. $5.

PROFESSOR HODGES differs from most writers on international relations in that he does not confine himself to any particular aspect of the subject, but ranges comprehensively over the whole field. An understanding of international relations, he points out, involves a kind of panoramic view of geography and sociology as well as of economics, history, and political science, since international events "are always compounds of these underlying elements." Such non-political elements, accordingly, as physiography, race, population, economic organization, means of communication, and the collection and dissemination of world news play a large part in his exposition. The net effect of this portion of the "background" is to emphasize not only the variety of interests with which international relations are concerned, but the inherence of such relations in the natural development of society. To these non-political elements politics adds powerful factors of its own. Diplomacy, in undertaking to regulate the relations between states, has developed a system of international intercourse which looks in the direction of world organization. The gains in that direction in the nineteenth century were not sufficient to withstand the crisis of 1914, and Professor Hodges sees the World War forcing the nations to "seek closer cooperation for the preservation of world unity."

The "driving force" in national politics today, however, is business, and while "economic hunger" impels nations to "seek commercial supremacy backed by the power of the state," Professor Hodges thinks that "enlightened self-interest is enforcing world cooperation in both political and non-political ways." His exposition, on the other hand, suggests a cooperation such as subsists in movement on parallel lines. A Great Power, he says, "must not only possess the old requisites of sufficient territory and population to bulk large in international relations," but "there must also be added at the very start a high-powered business system." As a consequence we "have to keep two kinds of worlds before us—the political and the economic," and of the two the economic seems to be the greater. International business exercises "a far-reaching economic 'right of eminent domain' in dealing with world affairs. It moves across political frontiers virtually at will. . . . For practical purposes, the business of these Great Powers has taken on itself the mandate for the control of economically less efficient peoples."

Professor Hodges's obvious sympathy with internationalism does not blind him to the virtues of historical nationalism and its great and continuing influence in the world. A careful weighing of the pros and cons leads him to the conclusion that "no one can doubt the power of nationalism for the next century or two as the outstanding political factor in international relations. At once it is a mobilizer of men's differences and of their loyalties. Perhaps in this age of the 'uprooted man' nationalism is the one conserving political force that holds him in allegiance. . . . While its manifestations arouse mixed feeling, the thing itself is solidly entrenched in our world."

On the more familiar phases of his subject, such as the League of Nations and the International Labor Office, the World Court and arbitration tribunals, international organizations and conferences, and the anti-war movement, Professor Hodges offers judicious comment and a wealth of data. The chapter devoted to the press is especially informing, and there is an excellent description of the actual work of the League. As far as information and substantive scope go the book is a veritable encyclopedia, and the numerous pictures, graphs, and statistical tables are an admirable supplement to the text. The attempt to expound so vast a subject on lines of general principles, together with the philosophical tone of much of the exposition, makes parts of the book hard reading, but the reader who will persevere to the end of the 678 pages will be rewarded with an all-round view of international relations not to be had from any other single work.

WILLIAM MACDONALD

Mercutio in Mayfair

Ronald Firbank. A Memoir by Ifan Kyrle Fletcher. With Reminiscences by Lord Berners, Osbert Sitwell, Augustus John, and Others. London: Duckworth. 8 *s.* 6 *d.*

ONE could wish that all memoirs of unusual people were written in the vein of this one, for it is not a conventional or a sentimental estimate, but a courageous attempt to capture, without apology, the unbelievably rare and defiant soul of Ronald Firbank, which, at Rome in 1926, unexpectedly, and as if perversely, as if suddenly deciding to take a train to Memphis, fled to its appointed sphere.

Our only criticism of this rather enticing book is that, inevitably perhaps, it lacks the gossamer humor befitting any treatment of its utterly fantastic subject. We think that Firbank's art deserves to be taken with the utmost seriousness, but the facts of his strange life merit a slightly different treatment. Mr. Fletcher, however, writes unpretentiously, and thus well. Of the other sketches, the one by Lord Berners is the best in the sense of slightly resembling the manner of the original. The one by Mr. V. B. Holland, an athletic acquaintance from Cambridge, is also extremely sympathetic. It was Lord Berners who executed the funeral arrangements at Rome, and "never dreaming" that Firbank was a Roman Catholic, had the writer buried in the Protestant cemetery, not far from Shelley. "The nightingales who attended the funeral," he writes, "were presumably Papist, for they did their utmost to drown the voice of the officiating chaplain."

When one asks what manner of man was this who could summon so remarkable a tribute, one is inclined to query whether he was a man at all. There are moments in "Prancing Nigger" and in the posthumous book which suggest the idea that if Puck or Ariel had been dressed up and sent down from Cambridge he would have written much the same sort of prose. Firbank actually makes one speculate on those fairy changelings, devoutely credited by the demon-haunted fancy of the Middle Ages. His peculiar talent as a writer calls up the vista of a mixed spiritual paternity, composed of Gautier, Beckford, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, P. J. Toulet, Crébillon fils, and Aubrey Beardsley. But not at all: in cold reality, Ronald was the son of Sir Thomas Firbank, M. P., a railroad magnate, and grandson of Joseph Firbank, known as "Faither" Firbank, a day laborer. Of these progenitors, the workman seems to have been the more interesting. One wonders what he would have thought of the creator of Cardinal Pirelli and Mrs. Mouth, whose first book was entitled "The Mauve Tower."

At Cambridge Ronald refused to know anyone, and spent most of his time, writes a contemporary, "in writhing about and admiring his hands," heavily studded with jade and sandstone

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rings. Almost his only close friend was Monsignor Barnes, Roman Catholic chaplain to the university. Not long afterward Firbank was definitely received into the Church of Rome, but he never seems to have practiced his religion, and his last act was the almost unprintable "Cardinal Pirelli" volume. Something must have happened, some unfortunate but inevitable "hitch." Firbank, one sees clearly, was, in the moral sense, one of the most honest of men. He would not eat his cake and have it too. But all Firbank ever reported of this case of conscience, which many converts manage to evade quite nicely, was when he said once to Lord Berners: "The Roman church wouldn't really have me, so I just laugh at her." He has been called a mere post-war Beardsley by those who do not appreciate him, but he was very unlike that artist. "Burn . . . for God's sake . . . all dirty drawings and papers," said Beardsley in his death sweat to a confessor. Somehow one cannot imagine Firbank giving anyone this direction.

If one judged Firbank without reference to the achievement of his twelve books, one might superficially put him down as one of the most insufferable sublunar creatures who ever wore trousers. He seemed to parade in his person and speech all the most inhuman affectations of a tiresome era. One evening in 1914 Rupert Brooke's biographer went out between the acts of the Russian ballet at Drury Lane and "noticed a strange figure pirouetting about in the corridor and making faces to itself. . . . Everyone stared, when suddenly the figure darted up to me, took my right hand out of my trouser pocket and shook it warmly, saying: 'I'm going to Kamschatka! Do you think I'm wise?'" To the superficial observer, we repeat, Firbank's existence, apart from his books, seems to consist of all the tedious preoccupations pursued by aesthetes the world over, whether in 1890 or 1931—big rings, Egyptian tombs, Egyptian cults, champagne, orchids, sight-seeing, the Russian ballet, first editions, reveling with young pimps in Paris, so near for your bold, bad Englishman, and, in every sense, so cheap. "My dear, I saw a crossing sweeper in Sloane Street today with the eyes of a startled faun! . . . My dear, when you talk like that you give me a distinct feeling of plush . . ." And so on. Lord Berners reports an absurd incident at the ballet when Firbank and a well-known female fantast, Lady X, both loudly complained that the one had "leered" at the other. But it must be obvious that the two stories we have told of Firbank could never have been told of any mere relic of the nineties, any disciple of the late Oscar Wilde. The latter and his friends, being, for the most part, men without real literary talent, were chronically afraid of making fools of themselves in the only world they really understood—that of society. They wanted to lead the fashion, not to defy it. Firbank, on the contrary, behaved, throughout his life, be it to fly, swim, dive into the fire, ride on the curled clouds, with the radiant unconscious humility of a St. Francis, recking nought of the conventions of a Nordic country. It was not so much that he defied certain social and moral conventions; it was as if he had never heard of them.

Firbank, as Mr. Sitwell somewhere says, was in the best and truest sense one of the war novelists. When 1914 came, he retired to Oxford, almost the one place in England left spiritually unshattered, and there he really began to write. Before the war Ariel had continuously eluded Caliban through all the well-worn avenues of dilettantism. Thenceforward the escape from life was opened up through his own books. Naturally they are very uneven, and the earlier ones seem a little derivative and unsure. But in the last two, "Prancing Nigger," with its dusky girls and boys, so different from those of Mr. Van Vechten, and the Andalusian volume, about the odd doings of a Cardinal, Firbank was superlatively himself, and no one has resembled him.

There are certain good reasons why these novels will never be much read. In the first place they seem dreadfully out of place in a post-war literary world which may be summed up, in the words of one of our most popular poets, as one of "smoke and steel." The athletic Mr. Holland has perhaps described them as well as anyone—"books written in that nebulous state while the dream still holds its spell, and its improbability and absurdity are not yet apparent." Of course there is a market for this sort of thing on the express condition that it be Cabellian, that is to say, manufactured, meretricious, and unutterably whimsical. The great point about Firbank is that he was never "whimsical." In his strange, unearthly, un-English way, he was profoundly humorous. There are touches of true Rabelaisian gusto in his last and best book which could be quoted, though to quote them is to divest them of much of their quality, like humming a few phrases from a sonata.

> "Misericordia!" Monsignor Silex exclaimed, staring aghast at the dog's leg poised, inconsequentially, against the mural tablet of the widowed Duchess of Charona—a woman who, in her lifetime, had given thirty million pesos to the poor!
>
> They were ringing "Paula," a bell which, tradition said, had fused into its metal one of the thirty piece of silver received by the Iscariot for the betrayal of Christ.
>
> "They seem to have asked small fees in those days," she reflected, continuing her work.

"A symbolical attitude perhaps," writes Lord Berners of his friend. "Many passages in his books seem as if written with his back turned [as, indeed, was his nervous habit while conversing] looking out of the window." And through that window of his unique mind there is no doubt that he saw some very curious things.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT

Beyond the Wasteland

Harmonium. By Wallace Stevens. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

MR. ELIOT merely defined the territory of the Wasteland and of its emotional ennui in a few stark details. Then he escaped from it into scholarship, into religion, leaving other poets to explore. Ivor Winters pushed its boundaries still further into hopelessness by pointing out that the passion of scholarship was in itself sterile, that man crumbled not only within his environment, but within the brain itself. Archibald MacLeish returned in desperation to the desert, naming it, whatever else it might be, the necessary "New Found Land," and better than exile from home. But none of these poets faced the problem which was Wallace Stevens's: here was a poet of the senses, a poet desirous of moonlight as any Keats, a poet aware of and sensitive to every subtle sensuous delight—what was he to do in death valley? Stevens's answer to this question is the very extreme of the Wasteland theory. His is the final word.

In the deliberate deflation of the emotions he has exceeded any of these others, for he has chosen to explore every mood, with full realization of its several anti-moods; he has chosen to build up the vision, only to prick it. He points out that the disassociation of the emotions lies not between one point in time or space and another point in time or space, but within the very inception of the emotion itself. No feeling is more than acknowledged before it splays out into a dozen different and antithetical feelings. No intensity mounts to its climax without the insidious question at its center.

Stevens will allow himself no protection: he will not cry out in bitterness, he will not deny one detail of multiform beauty, he will not play the "flat historic scale of memory," nor take momentary delight in "doleful heroics." He knows that love is a book too mad to read "before one merely reads to pass the time" and yet he reads it aloud. All is fantasy: the

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book of moonlight never has been written, and the protagonist, Crispin, is merely a fagot in the lunar fire whose heat comes only from the fables he, himself, scrawls. Stevens persists in being a poet of moonlight who in the end pricks the bubble of the moon itself.

For all these reasons, Wallace Stevens has been called a "Dandy." The word is unfortunate in its implications of superficiality, posturing, and super-refinement. Stevens's highly mannered, technically superb verse is so written because it best expresses his particular creative imagination: to this mind no simple statement is possible, every word has innumerable associations. This poet is sincere in being insincere, since to be sincere would for him be ridiculous. His sincerity lies in his attitude. Moreover if Stevens is over-refined, it is only because we still measure refinement by the normal bluntness preserving the ordinary man for his mechanical world—not by the truer instrument of the sensitive imagination. Refinement is all we have today of exuberance and vitality. It is no mere pose when for Stevens God is where,

> Above the forest of the parakeets,
> A Parakeet of parakeets prevails
> A pip of life amid a mort of tails,

no mere pose that woman worship, is for this poet merely an emanation from sensuous delight in "heavenly Vincentine."

Stevens having been driven by the afflatus of other poets into wandering away from such counterfeit, tells us that poetry is the "supreme fiction," that

> He gripped more closely the essential prose
> As being, in a world so falsified,
> The one integrity for him, the one
> Discovery still possible to make,
> To which all poems were incident, unless
> That prose should wear a poem's guise at last.

This is a new edition of "Harmonium." It is interesting to note that since 1923 the poet has repudiated only two poems, the Silver Plough Boy, a meaningless pretty imagistic verse, and Architecture, a poem in which the manner exceeded in difficulty the subject. He has included fourteen new poems amplifying the theme of the Crispin poems, grown slightly more autumnal:

> One might in turn become less diffident,
> Out of such mildew plucking neater mould
> And spouting new orations of the cold.
> One might, One might. But time will not relent.

EDA LOU WALTON

Popularizing Christian History

Since Calvary. By Lewis Browne. The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

THE subtitle of this work is "An Interpretation of Christian History." Since Mr. Browne can scarcely pretend to be offering anything like a new point of view, "interpretation" means, as it generally does, a license against thoroughness and precision, a half-apology for wandering rather aimlessly over two thousand years. Mr. Browne could hardly call a History this potpourri of rewriting from the best secondary and tertiary sources. What standards can he possibly claim to have employed in dividing his 428 pages among the centuries? One hundred and sixteen pages go to the first three centuries, 60 to the next five, and the period since 1648 is disposed of in 80 pages. And they are pages filled with a repetitious style which relieves Mr. Browne of having to say very much. This is even less the history of Christianity than Durant's was the history of philosophy.

A book like this serves, however, one useful function. The secret of a popular writer is, of course, that he has the same mentality as his readers. Consequently, "Since Calvary" is probably a good index to the notions about the history of Christianity which prevail among the six million persons who read non-fiction books in this country. How much of the last century of scholarship in the field has seeped through to this larger public, has become so commonplace as to be acceptable to large numbers despite their early religious training and their vested emotional interests? It is a safe guess that what Mr. Browne knows his readers also know or are at least ready to receive.

For one thing, there is a growing recognition of the minor role played by Jesus and Paul in the foundation and formulation of Christianity. Since writing "Stranger Than Fiction" Mr. Browne himself has learned that no one really knows what Jesus taught, that he is more the creation than the creator of Christianity, and that the "Pauline" theology is, rather, Hellenistic. The pagan character of emergent Christianity, a truism for thought since the French enlightenment, is also by now obvious enough to merit extended comment from Mr. Browne. So also with Constantine's highly political reasons for accepting Christianity, and the church's function thereafter in keeping the state's subjects subservient.

The growing polytheism of the church, its degeneration into a political institution controlling vast wealth ground out of the miserable peasantry and contested for by a horde of unscrupulous bandit-ecclesiastics, the decline of the monastic attempt at purifying the Christian life into simply another form of domination and oppression—these things are quite familiar to many, for Protestantism has been able to make capital for itself out of them. Much more reluctant has been the acceptance of the socio-economic reasons for the Reformation. Even the religious liberals who "humanize" Christ and accept the Bible solely as poetry dislike to think of the Reformation as it really was: of the rebellious hatred of the lower classes for church and state, and the cupidity of king and noble desirous of church wealth, aggrandized by the efforts of the middle class to break feudalism and make way for the era of laissez-faire. But though it is not a pretty one, the true picture of the Reformation is fast becoming widespread.

Most significant of all, Mr. Browne's book adumbrates, though timidly, an anti-clericalism and a conviction that Christianity is dying; and here, too, he probably reflects the hesitant and still uncrystallized sentiment of a large public. For the acceptance of the history of a religion without its pious whitewash is always preceded by religious indifference or hostility. If the harsh truths about Christianity were as firmly established as the day of the month, men still would not believe them so long as the church held their loyalty.

FELIX MORROW

Fiction Briefs

Brothers in the West. By Robert Raynolds. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

The Harper prize winner for this year strikes a new note which is yet strangely reminiscent of some period in the past. One goes all the way back to eighteenth century sentimentalism and budding romanticism, however, before one finds the period. Henry Mackenzie, that "Man of Feeling," would have liked this book with its tears and exposure of sensibilities, although dealing with strong men in a savage country. Mr. Raynolds's dying elk is brother under his skin to Lawrence Sterne's dead ass. And the cadaverous figure of the unhappy Donald somehow calls to mind the Old Man of the Hill out of "Tom Jones"—for even Fielding sometimes slipped into that fashion

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so adored by eighteenth century ladies of feeling. But Mr. Raynolds adds thereto a note of mysticism. These two great brawny brothers of his, rovers, miners, trappers, ranchers in turn, are always talking about "the place where we were born," a holy land, a mirage, which they find only in death. But in spite of these overtones and the bathos of the last chapters, there are some finely written passages, some excellent story telling, and a few well drawn characters in a book which, for the most part, holds the interest. It marks a complete break from the various kinds of contemporary realism. Conversations are not recorded after the manner of actual speech but are translated for us into more pure and subtle language. Details are spared us in favor of an atmosphere of vague and symbolic remoteness. The volume, appearing at the present moment when most serious novelists are seeking new ways of approaching the age-old problems, is an interesting experiment.

The Garden. By L. A. G. Strong. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

In writing about Dermot Gray, Mr. Strong seems substantially to be writing about his own boyhood. His novel is a sentimental revisit to the Dublin coast where this son of an English father spent his summer vacations with the relatives of his Irish mother. Some boyish adventures are recounted, but the book consists mostly of affectionate portraits of old friends. It should serve to augment the growing popularity of Mr. Strong, for it is well written in the manner that we have come to expect of a certain number of English novels each season. But above all it is well mannered. When Mr. Strong is writing a scene he makes no attempt to create it; but he can be depended upon to talk about it in a way that would be entirely charming and suitable from the lips of any gentleman. His good humor never leaves him, nor his polite inflection. And Dermot is so unadventurous and proper that he is almost an ideal hero for modern England. In the Epilogue he and some of his friends are shown to have died in the War. But this was no doubt needed for "artistic" reasons.

Seven Days. By Andreas Latzko. Translated by Eric Sutton. The Viking Press. $2.50.

This novel is an odd mixture of a melodrama and a plea for social justice. A young workingman named Abt, who feels that he and his family have been wronged by a wealthy baron, succeeds in trapping his enemy in an affair with a friend's wife. By threatening to expose him, Abt forces the Baron to change places with him for a period of three days, that the latter may experience the daily life of a laborer. The experiment results in the violent death of Abt. But the Baron meets an idealistic doctor, a well-known social worker who had befriended the dead man, and becomes converted to the socialistic beliefs which the doctor expounds. Some of the discussions and arguments are well thought out and constitute a powerful appeal for social change. But the story is quite unconvincing; and the characterizations are without distinction.

Simpson: A Life. By Edward Sackville-West. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

Simpson is a middle-class Englishwoman who refuses to marry and have children of her own, but spends her life nursing the children of others. This essential point of character is made clear at the outset; the rest of the novel is a simple account of the homes she enters and the children who call her "Nanny." After a certain length of time with a family, when the child begins to grow up, she insists upon making a change. She does not save her money. In the end she is killed in a post-war riot in Germany. Mr. Sackville-West has written about her and the inhabitants of her "temple"—that is, her children—with the utmost care and sympathy. His style is fluent. His understanding of people is good, if somewhat Q. E. D. The worst that can be said of his book is that it lacks necessity, and therefore direction, and therefore vitality. This is a shame, for into it have gone talent, rare self-effacement, and fine sensitivity.

Renée la Vagabonde. By Colette. Translated by Charlotte Remfry-Kidd. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

A sentimental love story, with the usual devices of resistance, capitulation, and renunciation, is told in a stilted translation of what must be an earlier, perhaps autobiographical, novel of Colette's. The heroine, Renée, is a dancer who was once the wife of an unfaithful, rascally portrait painter and is afraid of getting burned again. The story serves only to give her opportunity for vacillation, doubt, joy, acceptance, and finally, with unconvincing reasons, for putting aside second love. The psychological complications permit some excellently done love scenes and some good writing, which sticks through the translator's work and her habit of leaving quite translatable phrases in the original French.

The Orchid. By Robert Nathan. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.

Robert Nathan's latest account of life as it is lived on that queer delightful plane which he has discovered, that new dimension in which sentiment, irony, and absurdity meet each other face to face, which is so like our own plane as to seem a travesty of it and so different that it is both humorous and glamorous, maintains the same high level established by his previous little volumes. If you enjoyed the wisdom and satire, the wit and sentiment, the humor and sadness of "Autumn," "Jonah," and "The Woodcutter's House," you will read "The Orchid."

Morning Tide. By Neil M. Gunn. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

This is a quietly moving novel of childhood and adolescence in a Scotch fishing village, naive and charming in places but on the whole suffering from the limitations of the author's method. Mr. Gunn appears to have forgotten that to render a world as a child might see it, more than a meager simplicity is necessary. In their sensitiveness the reactions of a child are likely to be subtle to the adult, where those of the adult may seem circumscribed and limited to the child. To present a child's world so that the grown-up person may share its charms is thus a doubled-edged problem. If the author of "Morning Tide" has not succeeded in this very well, he has at least caught some of the unsophisticated appeal of the Scotch village itself.

Three Steeples. By LeRoy MacLeod. Covici-Friede. $2.50.

The criticism of a first novel is often of necessity evasive and equivocal. The author has virtues, but alas . . . Mr. MacLeod has written a first novel about which it is difficult to be equivocal. He has written a good novel—in fact, he has written two good novels. One is a study of the village of Midland, "somewhere in the eastern Middle West of the United States." The other is the story of Bruce Durken who has "gotten religion" somehow or other before the story begins. Since his conversion Bruce has one overpowering ambition, to become a preacher of the gospel of Christ. He antagonizes his father, who wants him to become a lawyer, and he practically loses his love, Myrtle. Finally, when he arrives at his goal, his father is killed; Myrtle, who has married another, dies in childbirth; Ab, his convert, commits suicide. He discovers that the "Great Good of the Church" had turned him aside and was really a mountain of Evil, that "Christ was dead and God only a great deafness over the world." Thereafter he aims to tell people the Truth, to show them that life is the only good, to correct the mistakes of religion. But

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first he must destroy the church his father built. He sets it afire and in trying to rescue someone from the flames is burnt to death himself. This bifurcated novel of meticulously studied background and the history of a "convert" is slenderly held together by the character Bruce. Were it not for the overabundance of detail about Midland, "Three Steeples" would hold the reader effectively by its sensitiveness and imagination alone. Midland is true, but Bruce is not the product of Midland. The forces that evolved Bruce receive inadequate attention, with the unhappy result that at the end the character seems a propaganda set-up, not the neurotic, fanatic child of emotion.

The Cross Bearers. By A. M. Frey. The Viking Press. $2.50.

"The Cross Bearers" is probably as accurate a description of the war as one can hope to get; none of the horror is left out and much of it is underscored, for the hero of the account is a stretcher-bearer and medical attendant in the German army. The experience of shock after shock, of overwhelming incompetence, of perpetual suffering is detailed with unending minutiae. For some reason or other these experiences seem remote, not finally real—not as a nightmare is unreal, but ungraspable as facts. This may be owing to a defect in the author's method, for "The Cross Bearers" bears the marks of an honestly recorded experience.

The Blind Man. By Olav Duun. Translated by Arthur G. Chater. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

This is the second volume of Olav Duun's six-volume saga of four generations of a peasant family in nineteenth-century Norway. The first volume, "The Trough of the Wave," was issued here in translation last year; and the succeeding parts are promised for the future. "The Blind Man" is a complete novel in itself, a powerful story dealing with fundamental emotions on a plane that lies close to the soil. "The People of Juvik," as the completed translation is to be entitled, will probably be recognized as one of the great works in its genre, taking rank with the analogous novels of Reymont, Hamsun, and Sudermann.

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